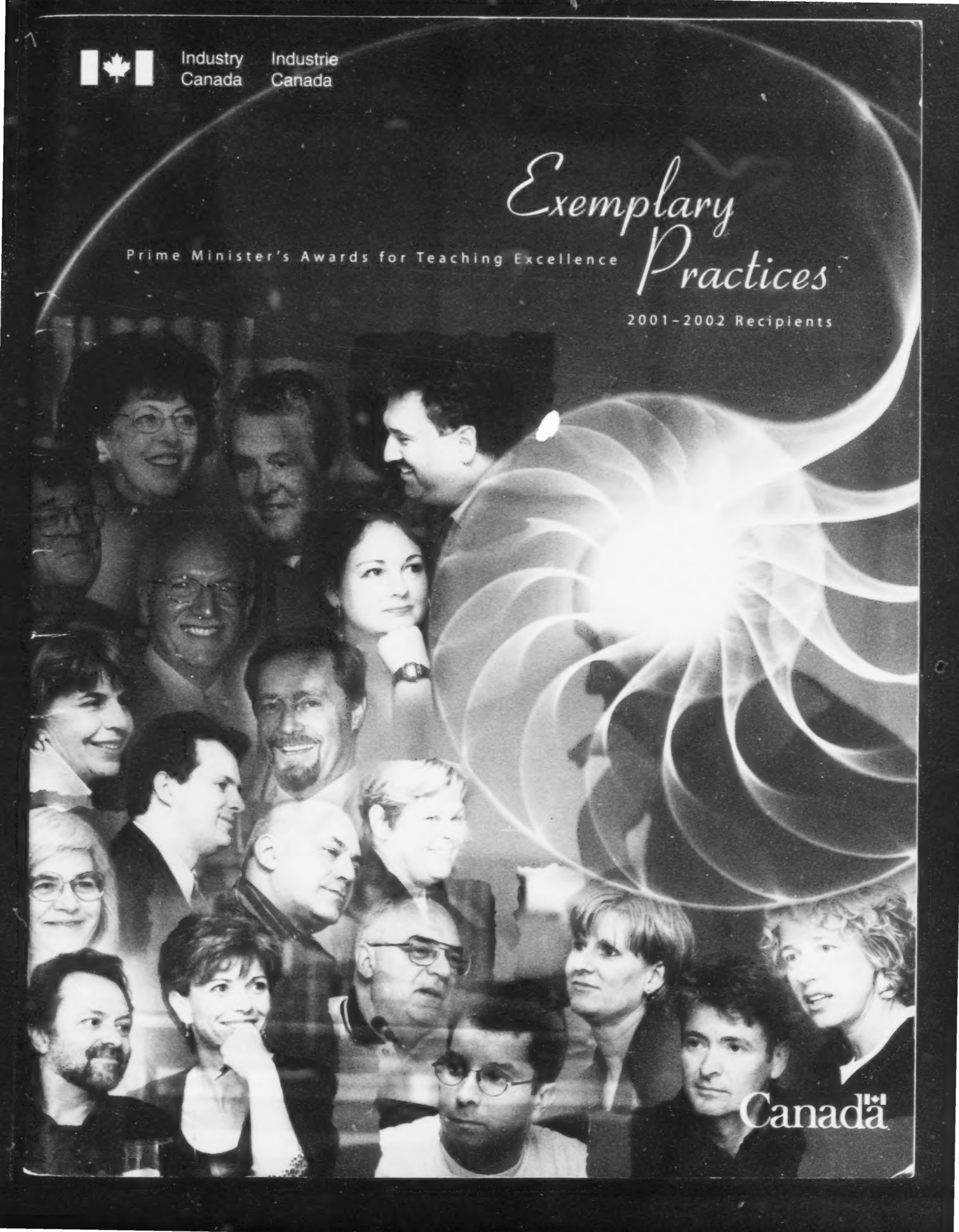
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Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence
2001–2002 Recipients
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Exemplary Practices

Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence

2001–2002 Recipients

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Aussi disponible en français sous le titre *Prix du Premier ministre pour l'excellence dans l'enseignement : Modèles de réussite*.

20% recycled material

Prime Minister Premier ministre

It has been my privilege over the past 10 years to meet with a group of exceptional teachers, the recipients of the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence. One of the reasons Canada is a strong, confident country is that there have always been educators, such as these, to inspire and teach the next generation of Canadians.

Looking at what these teachers have done, and continue to do, it is clear that they never stop challenging their students to learn and do more. The students, in turn, respond because their teachers believe in them. These outstanding educators know that everyone has a contribution to make to our society.

As impressive as they are individually, the teachers I have met over the past decade are equally astounding as a group. Our nation's teachers help make Canada an inclusive society. They do so by embracing the hopes of all Canadians. They welcome and support newcomers. They help persons with varying abilities and disabilities reach their potential. They inspire students in all parts of the country — rural, urban and remote — to believe in themselves and their communities.

These outstanding educators are also ensuring Canada's future, not only by educating the next generation of leaders and citizens, but also by instilling in all their students a concern for the environment and their fellow human beings.

As the Prime Minister's Awards program celebrates its 10th anniversary, it is my pleasure to present the latest edition of *Exemplary Practices*: a collection of ideas and practices from the 2001–2002 recipients of the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence. There is inspiration — and role models — here for all Canadians.

Once again, I would like to offer my congratulations to these exceptional teachers, as well as my thanks.

Jean Chrétien

OTTAWA
2003

Canada

We want to hear from you!

As the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence program approaches its 10th anniversary, we'd like to know what readers think of our flagship publication, *Exemplary Practices*.

This compendium of best teaching practices and ideas about education has been published for each group of top-level recipients. Each year's *Exemplary Practices* is also available on the program's Web site.

As the possibilities for publishing on the Internet become more sophisticated, we have put considerable energy into making the *Exemplary Practices* Web site an interesting, interactive and useful resource for educators. For the first time, this year, for example, we have included videoclips of our Certificate of Excellence recipients in their classrooms. At the same time, the print publication offers an in-depth look at our outstanding recipients.

We have received a lot of positive feedback about *Exemplary Practices* over the years. To ensure that the publication remains a valuable teaching resource, and as we enhance our electronic presence, we'd like to know what you think about *Exemplary Practices* and how it can be improved.

We encourage you to take a look at this book and our new and improved Web site (**http://www.pma-ppm.ca**), and then take a moment to drop us a line, either by post, fax or e-mail, or call our hotline (all the contact information is below) with your comments. Or, you can fill out a quick on-line survey on our Web site.

Thank you.

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Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence

Exemplary Practices on the Web

Find out even more about our 2001–2002 teachers at our improved and expanded Web site:

- more ideas
- more teaching practices
- video clips of the teachers in action.

Welcome

When excited and energetic teachers get together to talk about teaching, fascinating and inspiring ideas are the result! We hope you agree as you read the 2001–2002 edition of *Exemplary Practices*.

An unusually large group of Certificate of Excellence winners gathered in Ottawa in May 2002 for two days of best practice sessions. A total of 19 teachers — 13 individuals and two teams, one of two teachers from Kelowna and another of four teachers from Stittsville, Ontario — were honoured. Also unusual: two of the individual recipients hailed from the same Toronto school, one teaching English, the other machine technology.

Both the size of the group and the teachers' enthusiasm made for lively and occasionally impassioned discussions, as the teachers shared their thoughts about the broad issues of education and the fine details of teaching.

They talked about their schools and programs, and about the challenges of teaching in multiracial, multicultural schools, of making science and foreign languages relevant and attractive to students, and of teaching ethics and values along with theatre or social studies. The teachers also shared how they had seen education and their own teaching careers evolve over the years.

These conversations launched a series of group discussions: three or four teachers examining important issues in education and then sharing their conclusions with the larger group. All the teachers were surprised and gratified to discover how much they had in common, and interested in what they did not agree about.

The best practice sessions are reported in *Exemplary Practices* in five issue-based articles. For continued discussions with these exemplary teachers, we have included personal and professional profiles and information on how to contact them.

You will also read about the 50 recipients of the Certificate of Achievement. These teachers were honoured in award ceremonies in their own communities across the country.

If reading about these teachers reminds you of an exemplary teacher in your school or community, you will find more information at the back of the book about the Prime Minister's Award program and how to nominate a special teacher.

For even more information about the program, an on-line version of *Exemplary Practices* and plenty of helpful resources, go to the program Web site (**http://www.pma-ppm.ca**).

We at the Prime Minister's Awards program hope you find the 2001–2002 edition of *Exemplary Practices* a valuable resource. If you have any comments, please contact the program office by phone (1 800 575-9200) or e-mail (**pmawards@ic.gc.ca**).

Meet the Teachers

Carl Goulding

Mount Pearl Intermediate School
and Mount Pearl Senior High School
Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador

Grades 7–12: music, social studies, religion

Carl Goulding believes that students must not only be taught effectively, but also must take ownership of their learning. For example, his students develop self-confidence and responsibility by sharing the planning, development and staging of musical performances. As a music teacher, Goulding also believes that students develop musicianship, literacy skills and musical and theoretical understanding through choral performance. It is the transformation from the academic and theoretical to practice and performance that delivers the greatest achievement.

Goulding started several choirs at Mount Pearl Intermediate School and Mount Pearl Senior High School. Choir participation grew from 11 students to more than 200 in one year, and the various groups now include 21 percent of the school population. Students show significant improvement in communication, decision making, problem solving and organizational skills, with his choirs and music classes emphasizing teamwork, collaboration and peer mentoring.

The Mount Pearl Show Choir (**http://www.mountpearlshowchoir.com**) features singers and dancers and is very involved in the musical heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. The choir toured the province as part of the 1999 Provincial Soiree Celebration Tour, which paid homage to the traditional Newfoundland gatherings called soirees, and as part of the Viking 1000: Celebrate the Journey Tour. The choir has excelled at international competitions in New York, the Bahamas and Florida.

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Valerie Pike

Prince of Wales Collegiate
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

Grades 10–12: French (core and immersion), international studies

Valerie Pike sees her role as an educator as contributing both to students' formal education and to their moral and civic education. She enables her students to open doors to the rest of the world through language and cultural studies, to view themselves as citizens of the world and to learn about themselves and the subjects they study.

To that end, Pike spearheaded the transformation of her school's French department into a department of modern languages, offering popular programs in French, Spanish, Russian and international studies. These programs are much sought after by students, even though the courses require a major commitment of time and effort.

Pike was part of a team that designed the international studies course, which is unique in the province. The course, which sees 25 students a year travel to Cuba, was founded on partnerships with Canada World Youth and the Cuban ministry of education, and has gained accreditation as a university admission course. Pike was also a member of the first steering committee for *Le Français pour l'avenir*, a national on-line conference for French immersion and Francophone high school students.

Pike is the recipient of a number of honours, including the 2000–2001 Canadian Parents for French Teacher of the Year award for French Immersion in Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Rotary Award for Teaching Excellence for 2000–2001.

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Nancy Barkhouse

Atlantic View Elementary School
Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia

Grade 4: all subjects

Nancy Barkhouse believes that many technological resources in today's schools are still underused. To address this deficiency, she creates technology-based projects that build up the skills and equipment in the school, allowing students (and teachers!) to continue to expand their technology use even after the initial project is finished.

An early adopter of technology in the classroom, Barkhouse began by bringing her own computer to the classroom in 1987 (and creating the first Nova Scotia elementary school Web page in January 1995), and slowly built on that base for the next 15 years. Her classroom in that small, rural school has featured as many as 12 Internet-accessible computers.

Barkhouse excels at enhancing each year's teaching program to meet the needs of specific groups in that class. For example, she developed an in-school technology training program for Grade 4 and 5 students. The program boosted their technology skills and prepared them to teach those skills to other students. This not only increased the use of technological resources at the school, but also reduced the school's dependence on its single technology resources teacher. Barkhouse has also led the development of several SchoolNet Grassroots projects and successfully applied for grants from a variety of organizations.

Believing that teachers who continue to experience the frustrations and joys of learning new things make better teachers, Barkhouse has continued to develop her own professional skills, completing a master's degree in on-line education from the University of Southern Queensland in Australia. She also shares her skills with other teachers. She produced a video for fellow educators describing how children with Down Syndrome are integrated into classrooms and looking at some of the technology used to make this process easier.

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Ross Thompson

New Minas Elementary School
New Minas, Nova Scotia

Grades 1–5: music

In a caring, respectful manner, Ross Thompson finds and develops the individual strengths of every student, not just the ones who have a demonstrated ability for music. He builds on classroom teaching with extracurricular activities that create a lifelong love of music.

Convinced that performance carries a multitude of valuable learning experiences, Thompson creates as many opportunities as possible for his students to perform, including choirs for girls and boys, a chimes club and guitar club, and many opportunities to play the recorder and use in-class keyboard and computer technology. Thompson and his students were selected as a pilot school for the innovative computer-assisted composing program CIVIC. This program was developed by Acadia University in cooperation with the Nova Scotia department of education.

The school choir was featured among the best choirs in Atlantic Canada on a special CD of Christmas music produced by Sobeys Ltd. With these experiences, students learn confidence and become comfortable communicating in public. These lessons are easily transferred to other parts of their lives.

Thompson shares his enthusiasm and love of music with the whole community. He and a team of enthusiastic amateurs produce the annual performance of Fezziwig's Family Christmas Frolic. Since 1995, this community production has allowed performers ranging from five-year-old amateurs to seasoned pros to work together to entertain sold-out audiences. Each year Thompson creates a fresh and novel musical score for the event. Thompson is also the founder of the Annapolis Valley Honour Choir, which is now in its 14th year. Under his direction, the choir competed provincially and nationally and went to England, Wales, Austria and Germany.

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Kelly Brownrigg *Deb Robinson*

Guardian Angels Catholic School
Stittsville, Ontario

Grade 6: all subjects except French

School principal

A teacher for 14 years, Kelly Brownrigg sees each child in her class as a precious gift. Her aim is to give her students a positive sense of themselves, hope for the future, and respect for themselves, others and the environment. To nurture these attributes, she fosters individual creativity, awareness and positive thinking in her students with a rich and innovative curriculum.

Brownrigg brings zest and interest to her profession: team teaching in an open concept classroom, co-writing curricula for her school board, presenting workshops on the use of rubrics for assessment, and acting as curriculum leader at her school. She is equally enthusiastic about the potential of technology in teaching and acts as computer site administrator at her school and as coordinator of the Tech-Connect project.

Whether working with students or peers, volunteering for pilot projects, attending workshops and specialist courses, or completing a master's degree in education while teaching full time, Brownrigg exemplifies the importance of lifelong learning to all who know her.

Deb Robinson regularly sets up community and educational partnerships to enhance student learning. For example, Robinson developed a partnership with local art galleries so students could display their work and enter juried art shows. In conjunction with the municipal creative arts department, she brought local artists into the school. Another partnership, this time with the Royal Canadian Legion, brings seniors and students together. Student choirs entertain the seniors at their dinners.

With the Tech-Connect project, she seeks and develops links between her Catholic elementary school (she is the principal) and its associate Catholic high school, Sacred Heart Catholic High School. These links support teaching and sharing between schools and provide opportunities for multi-age and peer coaching that benefit both schools.

Robinson acts as the facilitator of her board's mentorship program for principals and vice-principals and at numerous professional development sessions. She also wrote the board's administrator's handbook. She received the Award of Excellence from the Council for Exceptional Children and was nominated for her board's Director's Award.

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Matt Dawber Helen Pat Hansen

Sacred Heart Catholic High School
Stittsville, Ontario

Grades 7–8: English and music, information technology team leader

Matt Dawber successfully combines a love of music and an interest in technology with his enjoyment of teaching. He is committed to self-improvement and continuous learning for both himself and his students. This commitment plays out in several ways.

Dawber founded the music program for intermediate and senior students at Sacred Heart, and it has seen a steady increase in enroiment. With student collaboration, he created on-line music courses and a collaborative music project, and pioneered the use of Web-based portfolios at the school. As part of the Tech-Connect project and team, Dawber encourages his students to use technology to enhance their music learning. In one project, students recorded and created a CD of the Guardian Angels Catholic School choir.

His activities benefit the entire school. Dawber planned, redesigned and maintains the school Web site, and encourages teacher collaboration in the arts and English, including teacher exchanges, peer workshops and other professional development sessions. Dawber has also written provincial Grade 10 music curriculum.

Grades 11 to OAC: law, communications and technology, and travel and tourism

"Learning should parallel life," says Helen Pat Hansen. She is skilled at aligning ministry curriculum objectives with the Conference Board of Canada's Employability Skills Profile to create significant, interesting and rewarding learning experiences for her students. This practical approach and philosophy have led an increasing number of students to enrol in her courses.

Hansen encourages and promotes the educational use of technology across the curriculum by involving herself in innovative projects within her school. These activities extend outside the school as well, through her work on the Tech-Connect project. She also acts as the site administrator for computers and technology at Sacred Heart, is a member of the school's information technology team, and carries out staff training in computer technology and as an associate teacher.

Hansen is recognized as a leader outside her school. In her teaching career, she has developed and implemented programs for both behavioural and gifted students. One such program involved the training and placement of students in the high-tech industry, a forerunner of today's partnerships between industry and high schools.

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Jean-Daniel Roy

École Sainte-Anne
Sherbrooke, Quebec

Grade 5: all subjects

Since receiving his Prime Minister's Award, Jean-Daniel Roy and his class have visited the Maginot Line in France (an elaborate system of defences built by France against Germany after World War I). It was a trip he had been planning for a long time. He approached students and their parents to discuss the possibility four years before they were due to enter his Grade 5 class. Previously, he had connected up with a teacher in northern France, researched possible activities and, unlike the builders of the Maginot Line, prepared for unexpected possibilities. And, he began all of this before he was given a permanent teaching position at his school.

Roy is the kind of person who thinks in the long term — who plants little acorns knowing that they will grow into big oaks trees, providing shade, shelter, homes for animals and, eventually, useful lumber.

For example, he associated himself with a small company that produces and distributes educational materials. From this humble beginning came a number of new technologies including *Pyramide mathématique*, a math-teaching software widely used in Quebec. In 1999, Roy was honoured by AQUOPS (an association of elementary and secondary school teachers who use software in the classroom) for his leadership in introducing technology into the classroom.

Equally important to Roy is a seed of a subtler sort: the respectful behaviour he insists on in his classes.

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Marie Hockley

Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School
Ridgeway, Ontario

Grades 9 to OAC: English, history

Recognizing that we live in a competitive world with high standards and demands, Marie Hockley prepares her students by setting high standards for them. "Teachers who set high standards are rarely disappointed," she explains. In addition, she fosters her students' growth by integrating academics with employability skills, teaching skills in both the cognitive and affective domains and encouraging students to take responsibility for their actions.

Her challenging, student-centred approach to learning brings out the best in students. An independent research project for her senior students develops confidence and research skills and improves literacy. Her Grade 12 and OAC students research the essential components of the Grade 9 reading and writing curriculum and the strategies to teach them. The students then develop lesson plans and tutor a Grade 9 student in his or her identified areas of weakness.

Hockley teaches "guess the test" strategies that encourage good note taking and study skills. Using these strategies, students significantly improve their test results. Both her academic and vocational students have a high success rate; several vocational stream students have been inspired to transfer to the academic stream through her peer tutoring initiative.

Hockley is also a leader within the school, working on assessment and literacy. In the latter, she led a team that developed the school's cross-curricular literacy plan, involving considerable in-service training and work with elementary teachers to help them develop literacy skills in younger students.

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Mike Hussey

Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute
Toronto, Ontario

Grades 9 to OAC: English

Mike Hussey teaches much more than English. He creates a critical awareness of the power of language and encourages students to take risks by creating an atmosphere based on mutual respect and support. Named most supportive teacher by the graduating class four years in a row, Hussey uses humour, innovative teaching practices sometimes disguised as eccentricities, gentle but effective discipline ("I am not your friend. I am your teacher.") and uncompromising standards for everyone, including himself.

Recognizing students' need for opportunities to hone their critical thinking and writing skills, Hussey designed with student input a Grade 11 course called Ethics and the Philosophy of Science, considered by many graduates to be the most essential of their high school courses.

He also designed the school's Advanced Placement English program and has overseen its growth from 36 students to more than 100, including students recently promoted from the school's English as a Second Language (ESL) program. He has worked with colleagues on bridging programs for ESL students moving into mainstream English classes, and is part of a school board curriculum committee working on this issue.

A founding member of the school's nationally recognized TOPS (Talented Offerings for Programs in the Sciences) science and mathematics focus program, Hussey is the only non-sciences teacher involved. He designed a TOPS "safety net" program of cooperative learning, problem solving and student bonding to improve retention rates in this demanding program.

As scholarship coach for Marc Garneau Collegiate, Hussey has helped students receive seven National Scholarships in the past six years (a Canadian record), and more than $400 000 in scholarships in the last six years alone.

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Doug MacCorkindale

Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute
Toronto, Ontario

Grades 9–12: broad-based technology, transportation technology

Doug MacCorkindale believes that the methods of business and industry provide valuable examples for education and the classroom. He models his classroom procedures on successful approaches used in industry, especially teamwork. Convinced of the value and efficiency of the apprenticeship learning process, he uses a holistic, blended approach to skills development. Students learn theoretical, analytical and application skills through hands-on projects and work in a learning environment with sound business practices, with impressive results.

Student teams created three one-third scale models of the Canadarm2 and designed and flew an American Eaglet sailplane. They also designed and manufactured a series of microgravity experiments that flew on NASA's KC135 ZeroG astronaut training aircraft. Many of MacCorkindale's former students have gone on to successful careers in technology and industry, with some even returning to the school to mentor the newest of his students.

MacCorkindale applies his convictions outside the classroom, too. He designed the East York school board's regulations and procedures for automobile design and construction in schools, and later created the curriculum, course material and handouts for Metropolitan Toronto's first project design course.

MacCorkindale also initiated partnerships with community and government organizations, including MD Robotics, the Discovery Channel and the Canadian Space Agency, to provide the means and opportunity for students to expand their learning.

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Ian Naisbitt

Concord Public School
Windsor, Ontario

Grades 5–6: mathematics, English, art, physical education, science, social studies

Ian Naisbitt has, in the words of one parent, "literally moved a mountain, a mountain of garbage." In the process, he's taught hundreds of students the values and skills that will make them valuable Canadian citizens in the future. Naisbitt uses the powerful message that students can make a difference to teach academic knowledge and the communication and organization skills students need to succeed in their school careers and environmental efforts, and in their lives.

To teach this lesson to his students and the school, Naisbitt and colleague Bryan Johnson organize moving Remembrance Day ceremonies, run the Kids for Saving the Earth Club at the school and donate blood regularly. Naisbitt also had the privilege of donating bone marrow on one occasion. His largest project is the Little River Enhancement Group (**http://www.lilreg.com**), which is dedicated to the restoration of the entire Little River watershed. This non-profit organization grew out of a classroom project to clean up a section of the river. A significant amount of fund-raising, public awareness campaigning and letter writing (and learning!) by the students back up this ongoing environmental effort.

Happy to share his insights and expertise with other teachers, Naisbitt has published professional development materials on environmental education in both French and English, answers e-mailed questions from teachers around the world, and leads professional development sessions in Windsor-area schools.

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Mary Lou Mastromonaco

Bishop Grandin High School
Calgary, Alberta

Grades 10–12: English as a Second Language

Mary Lou Mastromonaco sees English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers as having a two-fold role: teaching English skills, as well as helping students to learn about and embrace Canadian culture, while encouraging them to take pride in their own language, culture and traditions. Twelve years' experience as an academic English teacher and a deep interest in the dynamics of second-language learning equip her to provide a solid learning base to her students.

Mastromonaco has developed several initiatives to help her students quickly and effectively adapt to their new country. She works with community organizations on partnership programs that give ESL students job skills, and training and employment opportunities. She coordinates innovative adjunct classes with fellow teachers to help ESL students succeed in mainstream English and social studies courses. She also set up a volunteer host and tutor program that pairs Canadian students with ESL students. The students learn about each other's culture. This program also provides the ESL students with English language practice and tutoring in specific subject areas. In addition, she organizes extracurricular activities for her students, such as horseback riding, and trips to a local television station, theatre productions and Calgary Flames hockey games.

In an effort both to improve her own teaching and broaden other teachers' understanding of the challenges facing high school ESL students, Mastromonaco has hosted and organized ESL professional development days and created several teaching units on local history and culture. She is currently teaching 50 students who have come to Canada from 24 countries on five continents.

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Lee Curtis

Langford Alternative Education Program
Victoria, British Columbia

Grades 8–9: mathematics, English, science, physical education, social science, keyboarding, art, career preparation

Lee Curtis carefully and skilfully draws the Grade 8 and 9 students in the Langford Alternative Education Program into a deliberate process of personal change and academic success. He begins by helping students see themselves as capable masters of their destiny, rather than angry and dispirited victims of circumstance, abuse or disability. He then offers students a mix of life skills and academic learning according to their needs, lessons in social responsibility, truthfulness and citizenship, and activities to strengthen reading and employability skills. Students succeed against considerable odds, many returning to the regular school program as successful participants and academic achievers.

After three years of teaching grades 4 and 5, Curtis moved to teaching alternative programs, which he has been doing for the past 22 years. To improve his own teaching skills, Curtis completed a master's degree in school counselling in 1993. He has worked as a practicum supervisor for students in the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria for the past 14 years, and has spoken on several occasions at the university and to other groups on working with at-risk youth.

In addition, he represents his school district on the Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee (VFCYJC), which advocates for youth and families involved in the court system. Curtis also heads the VFCYJC's subcommittee on education, which makes recommendations on issues that affect at-risk students and the legal system.

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Carol Livingstone

Hugh Boyd Secondary School, Richmond, British Columbia

Grades 11–12: business education, business computer applications

Carol Livingstone reshapes her classroom into a boardroom: her business education students work as a team to run a company and she is a facilitator. Students develop skills in sales, marketing, finance and customer relations through class-run desktop publishing ventures.

She augments students' business learning with lessons in personal development, leadership, networking, cultural sensitivity and community involvement. These lessons are often part of projects, such as one on the cultural history of indigenous peoples, which promotes better understanding of First Nations peoples, and another in which the students published a fund-raising cookbook for the Boys and Girls Club in the Comox Valley.

Since becoming head of the business education department at Hugh Boyd Secondary in 1995, Livingstone has worked hard to make business education interesting and rewarding for students. She introduced the Entrepreneurship Career Preparation program, developed the Boyd Business Diploma program, and instituted corporate-style incentives, including shares, salaries and scholarships. Student demand for business education courses has increased dramatically as a result. A third of Grade 11 and 12 students now take these classes.

Livingstone has received numerous awards for her innovative and influential teaching, including the provincial Outstanding Business Educator award and several Junior Achievement awards for teaching excellence. She contributes to national and provincial business education through participation in University of Toronto research, ministerial task forces, curriculum development and presentations at conferences and other professional development sessions.

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Doug Grunert *Brad Talbot*

Rutland Senior Secondary School
Kelowna, British Columbia

Grades 10–12: science, environmental science, chemistry, career preparation

Doug Grunert is dedicated to improving science education in his school and area. A teacher since1978, Grunert has been actively involved in science curricular development, in both the Kootenay and Okanagan valleys of British Columbia. In recent years, he set up the Advance Placement chemistry program at Rutland Senior Secondary School. He also secured funding to equip his chemistry lab with spectrophotometers, digital pH meters and analytical balances.

In 1992, Grunert and fellow teacher Brad Talbot began working together to create a new way of teaching the sciences. They blended biology, chemistry and the province's mandatory work experience program into a new course called Environmental Science. The course moves out of the classroom and into the real world as often as possible. For example, Environmental Science students manage an annual community toxic waste disposal weekend in Kelowna and participate in Project COOL (Clean our Okanagan Lake). Students with SCUBA diving experience help clean up the estimated tonnes of debris from Okanagan Lake annually.

Today, Grunert can be found conducting tutorials for students outside of school hours, working as an external evaluator for the Okanagan University College chemistry department, training students in SCUBA diving, or snowboarding down the local ski hill as a member of the Canadian Ski Patrol.

Grades 10–12: science, environmental science, biology, career preparation

A biology teacher since 1976, Brad Talbot brings a wide variety of learning experiences to his students. For example, he arranges partnerships with veterinarians, pharmacies and pet store owners to allow his students to interact directly in animal husbandry programs. Field trips enhance a "hands-on" approach to learning and are an important aspect of his teaching style.

In the Environmental Science course that he developed and team-teaches with colleague Doug Grunert, students are immersed in life skill experiences. Students raise Kokanee salmon in the classroom, are stewards of a local stream and still find time to spend two weeks on a foreign excursion exploring numerous ecosystems around the world.

Talbot has contributed to science education outside his classroom as well. With a master's degree in administration and curriculum, he served as head of the science departments at Rutland Senior Secondary between 1979 and 1993, and coordinated Advanced Placement courses from 1988 to 1990. He was president of the Central Okanagan Biology Teachers' Association for two years and sat on several committees, including the district examination committee and the staff advisory committee.

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Rod Osiowy

Mount Baker Secondary School
Cranbrook, British Columbia

Grades 10–12: video/TV, acting, stagecraft, theatre

Rod Osiowy sees theatre and the arts as the heart of all education. With that in mind, he sets out to reach his students with a careful blend of practical and emotional challenges. He designs projects with science, English, music, hospitality and social studies teachers that integrate and expand learning, including his own, and encourages students to reflect, respond and critique everyone's work.

This work includes student-created public awareness videos on a wide variety of issues (these led to a UNESCO-sponsored media project on youth social justice in Costa Rica) and at least three student-run theatre productions each year.

Osiowy's leadership has almost doubled participation in the school's drama program, with students achieving a 99 percent pass rate. Many of his graduating theatre and video students receive scholarships for post-secondary education. Former students now have successful careers with major theatre companies, including those at the Stratford Festival and Circle in the Square in New York. Others have found work in the film industry as technicians and actors.

Osiowy constantly expands his own, and the school's, students' and other teachers' capabilities by bringing new technologies into the classroom and upgrading his skills whenever possible. He co-founded an international association for flying effects in theatre, currently serves as president of the provincial drama educators' association, and is part of the provincial drama curriculum*-writing team. He also publishes articles in professional journals and maintains the British Columbia drama teachers' Web site.

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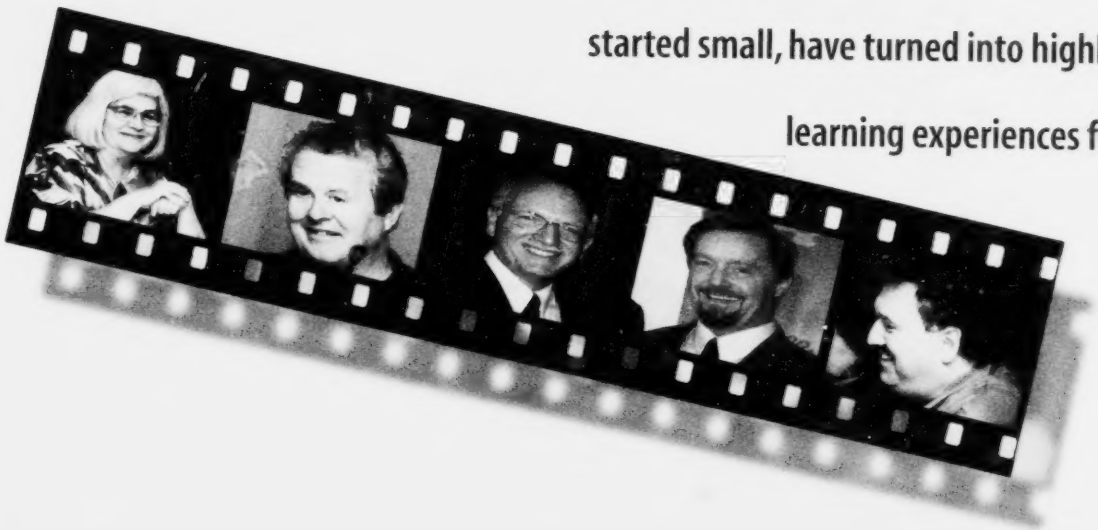
Have you ever wondered how those popular school programs — the ones that all the students want to join — get started and achieve such great things? Several of this year's Prime Minister's Awards winners are the driving force behind exceptional programs that, although they may have started small, have turned into highly successful learning experiences for students.



The Evolution of a Program

Where do these programs come from? Do they spring fully formed into the educational world or do they evolve with trial and error over time?

While a program might be born in a flash of inspiration as a teacher searches for a way to connect the curriculum to student experience, "programs, their activities and their scope definitely evolve over time," says Ian Naisbitt, a Grade 5 and 6 teacher at Concord Public School in Windsor, Ontario.

His program — which began as a one-time clean-up of a particularly polluted section of a local river — is a case in point. Naisbitt originally intended to use the project to teach language arts, science and civics to his students. But over time, and with runaway student and community enthusiasm, his simple project grew into a program of Clean-Up Crusades, tree planting campaigns, letter writing, public speaking and fund-raising about the whole Little River watershed (see "Environmental Action in the Curriculum," page 19).

Similarly, Jean-Daniel Roy's international, multimedia, multiyear cultural exchange program developed slowly out of conversations with other teachers and as part of a deliberate plan on Roy's part to make the most of the latest communications technology. Roy's students at École Sainte-Anne in Sherbrooke, Quebec, hosted a group of French students and then later toured France (see "A Virtual Project Becomes Real," page 21).

Nancy Barkhouse's program — a year-long radio program for her students — on the other hand, met a specific classroom challenge, but it, too, grew in unexpected ways. Her Grade 4 class of 19 boys and 14 girls at Atlantic View Elementary School in Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia, had, because of the ratio of boys to girls, a "reputation." Hearing about the benefits of auditory learning, especially for boys, Barkhouse started on the thought process that led to the radio program. However, what began as eight 15-minute segments ended up being 20 hour-long shows!

What's Involved?

Every program is different, but teachers who've created great programs agree that with passion, commitment and energy anyone can build a successful one. The Prime Minister's Award recipients recommend some key steps to follow.

Ian Naisbitt

Concord Public School
Windsor, Ontario

Ian Naisbitt still remembers the day in April 1989 when he saw a green heron standing on a car tire amidst a disgusting mess of human discards piled in the Little River and realized that nobody cared about this little piece of nature. "Never doubt that a small group of citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Inspired by these words of Margaret Mead, he proceeded to change people's attitude about the Little River, starting with his students at Concord Public School.

Have a Vision

First, start with a clear vision and hold on to it, in spite of the inevitable setbacks and complications, says Carl Goulding, who is a music teacher at Mount Pearl Intermediate School and Mount Pearl Senior High School in Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador.

When Goulding began teaching at Mount Pearl in September 1982, only 11 students attended his first choir rehearsal. Undeterred, Goulding spread the word that the choir was open to everyone. "I took every opportunity to perform that I could get," he calmly explains — "anything to raise the profile of the choir in the school." He also let it be known that he would tutor anyone (no matter how little skill they had) who wanted to learn to sing.

By the following June, 200 students were singing their hearts out in the Mount Pearl Chorale. Since then, two show choirs, a concert choir, an annual spring production and countless smaller choirs, trios and madrigal groups have sprung from that first group.

To hold onto that clear vision for your program, "don't get distracted; stick to what you've decided to do," recommends Doug Grunert of Rutland Senior Secondary School in Kelowna, British Columbia.

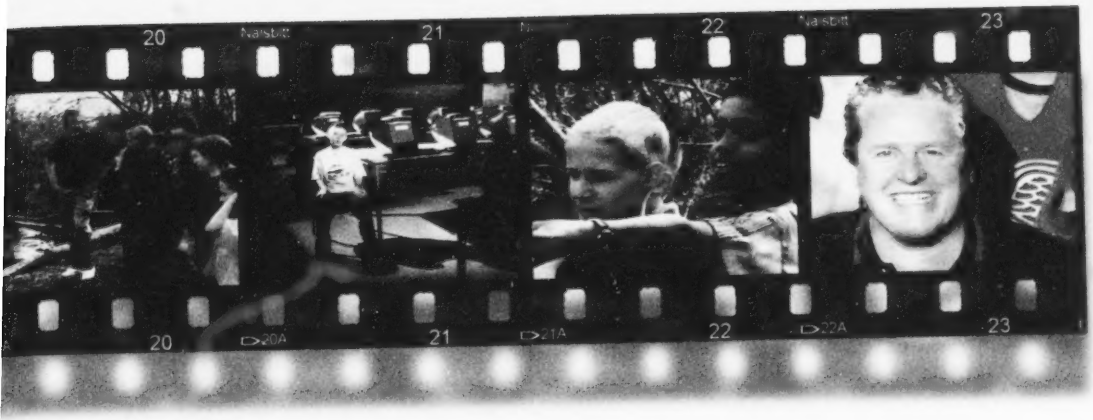
He and colleague Brad Talbot team-teach Environmental Science, a course of classroom experiments and presentations, field trips, career preparation and guest speakers that culminates in a foreign excursion (see "Journal of Learning," page 22). The course consists of fascinating activities such as SCUBA diving, hiking, stream stewardship and raising rare or endangered animals in the classroom. "While we feel a constant need to enhance and revise our program — to keep it relevant in an ever-changing society — we strive to maintain our basic objectives at the same time," explains Talbot.

Connect with the Curriculum

When designing your program, keep it curriculum-based in some way, suggests Nancy Barkhouse of Atlantic View Elementary School. Find a program that excites you and the students, and then make it work with as much of your curriculum as possible. Since a classroom program is not going to occupy all your time (and should not), there is still plenty of time to meet the other curriculum objectives, she says.

Barkhouse's project, "Surf's Up" (Students Using Radio Facilities for Sharing our Unique Perspectives), addressed many components (but not all) of the language arts, arts and social studies curricula. The program, though longer than she originally expected, did not take up the whole year, nor did it fill every school day.

Eight teams of four students each researched a topic, interviewed guests, developed and wrote a script, then nervously rode with their teacher to the radio station to deliver a series of live radio shows. (Transcripts are available at **http://www.aves.ednet.ns.ca/surfsup/**.) The other shows were recorded on CD at the school for later broadcast.



Environmental Action in the Curriculum

Ian Naisbitt's Little River Enhancement Group (**http://www.lilreg.com**) program is doing more than rejuvenating an entire watershed. It teaches his Grade 5 and 6 students at Concord Public School in Windsor, Ontario, the importance of volunteer action and lifelong learning.

Four statements posted in Naisbitt's classroom guide his teaching and reinforce the students' appreciation and understanding of their work, which includes organizing school assemblies and clean-up days and writing letters to elicit community support for their tree planting projects.

Learning through volunteerism. At the end of a strenuous day cleaning up a river or planting trees, Naisbitt's proud students can see that they have made a difference to the environment and their community. The children build on that pride by writing reports about their volunteer activities. Naisbitt helps the students polish their work, and then e-mails the reports to the local newspaper and to the principal for inclusion in the school newsletter.

Many hands make less work. The students learn first hand about the value of partnerships, since Concord Public School and the Little River Enhancement Group are active members of a community network of organizations. Naisbitt builds on this understanding in the classroom through cooperative projects, and with cooperative games in physical education class.

Learning is lifelong. Many professionals (biologists, engineers, foresters and farmers) contribute to the program and visit Naisbitt's class as guest speakers, clearly demonstrating to the students how their learning is used in the workplace. In addition, many of the guest speaker topics later reappear in the current events presentations the children do, researching and reporting on environmental issues around the world.

Showing appreciation. Naisbitt teaches teamwork and partnership skills by encouraging his students to say "thank you." Students create thank-you cards during art class, and write letters of thanks to their guest speakers and supporting businesses. Many of these cards are proudly displayed on recipients' bulletin boards for years!

Plan and Delegate

As a program gains momentum, it is critical to bring in helpers, says Naisbitt. Obviously, you will have to handle everything yourself for a while, but as the program gets going be prepared to delegate jobs in an organized way. "You have to learn to ask for help," he explains. "It's simply not possible to do it all yourself and, besides, other viewpoints and perspectives benefit the project."

Naisbitt's river clean-up program has grown to such an extent that the only way for him to ensure it continues successfully is to plan and then delegate research, fund-raising, soliciting donations of equipment, and scheduling and organizing field trips to parents, community members, businesses, fellow teachers and other environmental groups — "with plenty of pizza as rewards!" Naisbitt chuckles.

Before your program gets rolling, it is important to anticipate and address administrative details (such as waiver forms, school board approval or special funding), so they do not bog you down later, recommends Barkhouse. Most importantly, she stresses, arrange internal coverage or a substitute teacher well before you need to be out of your class.

Gather this support from your administration and fellow teachers by getting them excited about the educational value of what you are doing, add Grunert and Talbot. In their case, they keep everyone in the school well informed about what they are doing and what the students are learning. To bring parents on side, Grunert and Talbot use advertising, evening presentations, newsletters and whatever else is necessary to make students and parents aware of their program and what it offers.

Sometimes you need to make a gutsy move to get people on board. Carl Goulding tells the story of how he gained the necessary support from his school administration for the financing of the Show Choir equipment. "I knew that I needed capital to purchase up-to-date synthesizers, sound-mixing boards, microphones and band gear to get the kids interested in the choir. The school had a piano — period. Funds were scarce. I went to the music store, bought what we needed and told the principal the choir would fund raise the cost, or I'd pay for it myself." The equipment was paid for in a few months, the program got started and it has never looked back. And the school administration and school board are enthusiastic supporters.

Expect the Unexpected

Sometimes all the planning in the world will not prevent the unexpected from happening, so you need to stay flexible and keep a sense of humour, says Barkhouse. Calm, comfortable and apparently unfazed by sudden complications, Barkhouse had originally planned to have her students create only eight 15-minute radio segments as part of the Surf's Up program. "Then the radio station told me that they could only schedule a one-hour format," she remembers with a laugh. "It was a huge time commitment that I really hadn't planned on." Almost before she knew it, though, the program grew to

Nancy Barkhouse

Atlantic View Elementary School
Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia

Nancy Barkhouse sees what could be and goes for it! "Going for it" includes developing innovative and constructive approaches to learning. She gives her students many opportunities to create and manipulate information. Her love of learning and desire to share that enthusiasm with the entire school community leads her to be an advocate for new and innovative forms of education and to acquire the resources, support and training to implement programs.

A Virtual Project Becomes Real

A simple e-mail message sent to a class at École Sainte-Anne in Sherbrooke, Quebec, became an extraordinary multiyear cultural exchange between two schools in two countries.

It all began, explains Jean-Daniel Roy, with a message from a class in France asking about Hallowe'en. Hallowe'en was becoming popular in France, and the French students wanted to know all about it so they could celebrate it in their village.

Roy organized his class into teams. Each team researched different aspects of Hallowe'en and then sent the information to their peers in France. Later, the French class reported on its first Hallowe'en.

A regular correspondence developed between the two classes and grew to include other research projects, video conferences and Internet chat. Eventually, both teachers had the same idea: an exchange between the two schools.

Two sets of students and parents, two teachers and two schools set out to organize the exchange. They decided to take four years to prepare students from the Grade 2 classes for a trip in their Grade 5 year. Four years was necessary to organize the financing and logistics as well as to prepare the students academically to take full advantage of the trip, explains Roy.

The classes developed a Web site to present their work to each other and the world (see Échange Scolaire Québec-France at **http://www.educatic.qc.ca/quebec-france/**). The teamwork rapidly spread beyond the classroom as the students got to know each other and the trip date grew nearer. They wrote e-mails from home and occasionally telephoned each other.

Finally, in the fall of the Grade 5 year, the French students arrived for a two-week visit. Together, both classes toured Quebec and shared many lessons in language arts, math, social studies, geography and history. Quizzes about each other's countries sharpened their knowledge and the Canadian students' anticipation of their return trip the following summer. The students learned an important lesson, beyond their knowledge about France and Canada, says Roy. "They learned that if you tackle something hard and really work at it, you can succeed. In later years, when they are facing some big challenge, they will know that they have already faced a big challenge and that they can do it."

Satisfied that the years of work were worth the effort, Roy would like to see another exchange take place in the future. Two teachers working together on a project like this would guarantee continuity and make the workload a lot lighter, he suggests. "Ideally, I'd like to set up a situation with two classes, one here and one in France where we would do something like this every five years."

The Internet site contains the necessary information to organize such a project. In addition, Roy has written a guide containing everything he learned while pioneering the idea.

Journal of Learning

Brad Talbot and Doug Grunert created journals for their Environment Science students to record, analyze and assimilate the flood of new information and adventures they experience in the course of their two-week foreign excursion trip. While on these trips, students have scuba dived in the Cayman Islands, Bonaire, Hawaii and Bali, and sailed the Gulf Islands of British Columbia. The students find these environmental journals a valuable compilation of memories to last a lifetime.

Similar to school agenda books, the trip journals have laminated colour covers and spiral binding. In the first section of the journal, Talbot and Grunert present maps, brochures and photographs of their destination. Next is a dive section with important information and safety reminders about diving. This is followed by an identification section that lists and illustrates the fish and other organisms the students might encounter.

The bulk of the journal is reserved for the student's environmental diary. The pages have large sections for the student to write about the activities of the day and to record what he or she learned, as well as spaces for photographs and other memorabilia. "We ask students for the 10 highlights of each day," explains Grunert: "what environmental issue stands out in their mind, what concerns them, what could be done about it." There is additional space for personal writings, poetry, lists of contact people and fellow students, and sketches. "The kids spend hundreds of hours on their journals," comments Talbot. "They are literally works of art by the end of the course." The journals account for 20 percent of the final course mark.

With all the work and thought that goes into the journals, "they're valued keepsakes as much as educational tools," Talbot explains. "We have to beg and borrow journals to show visitors, school board officials or next year's class because the students refuse to part with them!"

20 hour-long shows. Once she got over her shock, Barkhouse realized that the increased programming time allowed more curriculum involvement as the students researched more topics.

Succession Planning

Finally, since you may wish to retire, change jobs or leave your program for some other reason, plan to spend at least two years training a replacement, say all the teachers. Since the success of a program involves vision, planning, organization, delegation and lots of support and participation, it is not something another teacher can step into overnight.

A teacher can hand a successful program over to the community or parents to continue, recommends Ross Thompson, a music teacher at New Minas Elementary School in New Minas, Nova Scotia (see "Build a Strong Foundation…," right). He did just that with the Annapolis Valley Honour Choir, an awarding winning youth choir, noting that preparing the parents and ensuring that the organization's infrastructure is solid were critical steps. Naisbitt's Little River clean-up, too, has grown up and left home. The Little River Enhancement Group will manage the Little River watershed in perpetuity.

While the original teacher may move on to other things, some programs are so educationally successful that other teachers adopt and adapt them. In addition to making environmental education presentations at professional development conferences, Naisbitt has used his experience with the Little River Enhancement Group to develop curriculum for his school board and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists.

Carl Goulding

Mount Pearl Intermediate School and Mount Pearl Senior High School
Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador

"Every student has a part to play," says Carl Goulding. By this he means that not only does every student have something valuable to contribute, but every student is entitled to the opportunity to discover what his or her talent is and then develop it. Simultaneously patient and demanding, relaxed and filled with passion, he uses private tutoring, peer tutoring and mentoring, teamwork and solo projects to help his students develop their full potential.

Build a Strong Foundation...

...and your program will last forever. At least that is the hope of two Prime Minister's Award recipients, Ross Thompson and Ian Naisbitt, who have both worked to ensure the longevity of beloved programs they started. When it is time to pass a successful project on to the community, they recommend the following steps.

Form a community group. Look for parents, relatives and business owners who are both interested and prepared to work together to maintain your program.

Discuss ideas with your group. Decide on a clear goal and vision. Keep it simple. Put it in writing. Describe the benefits for the community and for your group.

Assign roles to members of the group. Keep the roles simple and manageable. Put them in writing. Describe the job responsibilities for each position.

Investigate becoming a non-profit organization. You may be required to incorporate to become a non-profit organization, and provide regular financial reports to the provincial or territorial government. The advantages of this, explains Thompson, are that your government can supply you with a standard set of by-laws, which saves you having to develop by-laws yourself, and that you may be eligible for charitable organization status.

Develop partnerships. Approach individuals, businesses and other groups in your area that can help you with your project. (This is where having a clearly written vision, plan, and roles and responsibilities will help you present your project positively and explicitly, says Naisbitt.) Be creative in approaching possible partners; you never know who might be interested in getting involved!

Investigate funding opportunities. "There are hundreds of foundations and grant organizations in the country set up to support community projects," says Naisbitt. "You just have to find them — and this can be one of the roles in the group — and apply."

Finally, and perhaps hardest of all, let go and let the new team take over. Use all your new free time to start another program!

Doug Grunert *Brad Talbot*

Rutland Senior Secondary School
Kelowna, British Columbia

"Environmental education is not about re-inventing the wheel. It's about connecting the spokes. It is very important for students to become well rounded in a variety of disciplines in order 'connect the spokes' into a new body of knowledge. Understanding that students learn best when they actually experience the learning environment, I try to bring physical hands-on activities that demonstrate principles to my students. For them as well as myself, I urge that we discover our strengths and then work toward excellence."

"My view and style of education use text as a reference to the hands-on experiences we offer our students. Moving out of the traditional classroom setting into involvement with 'real life' issues serves to instil values and deepen understanding of our environment as well as teach academic knowledge. The bond formed with the students through these kinds of activities is, to me, the unique privilege and reward of the teaching profession."

Is It All Worth It?

Programs expand and enhance the curriculum, take the students out of the classroom (both figuratively and literally) and show them the real world beyond their school and neighbourhood. The rewards can be impressive.

Grunert and Talbot and their students have received a number of special commendations for their Environmental Science projects. These include a conservation award from the British Columbia Wildlife Federation, an environmental award from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and an award from British Columbia's minister of the environment. As a teaching team, Grunert and Talbot have been guest presenters and panel members at the Simon Fraser Institute for Environmental Educators and have developed a variety of teaching materials for environmental studies.

Barkhouse, partly due to her success with the radio project, has been seconded to the school board to lead on-line professional development.

The recognitions and rewards collected by Mount Pearl choirs make an impressive list, one that includes performances at Expo '86 and Walt Disney World and for three Royal Family visits. Their awards include first place at the Show Choirs of North America Festival in 1996 and second place at the North American Show Choir Competition in 1990.

Naisbitt and the students of Concord Public School have received numerous awards for their work to protect and restore the environment, including the Champion Defender of the Planet award from the United Nations Environment Programme. Concord is one of 30 schools in North America so recognized.

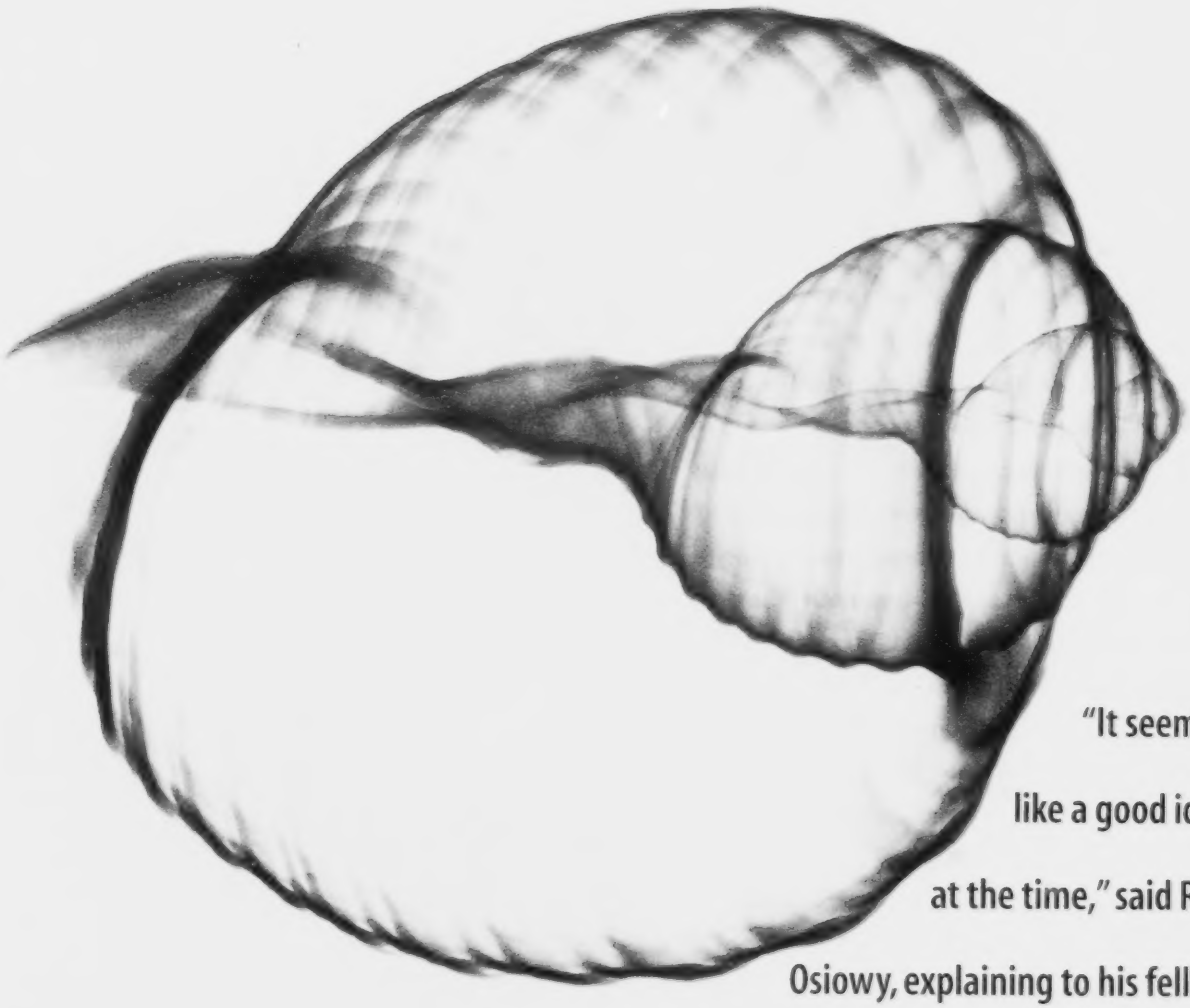
Besides these tangible awards, a successful program can garner some invaluable but intangible rewards, too.

For some students, a successful, exciting, challenging program can change their lives. "My students, and their parents, tell me that belonging to the choir changed their lives," says Goulding. Shy students gain confidence, musically talented students gain invaluable experience and all students gain life lessons and lifelong memories.

Over the year her program ran, Barkhouse's entire class showed clear gains in academic skills. "With research, interviewing and script writing, my students' reading levels improved tremendously," comments Barkhouse. In addition, their confidence, work habits, classroom behaviour, and organizational and cooperative skills improved, too.

"In terms of enrolment and academic success, the Environmental Science course has grown beyond our wildest dreams," Grunert and Talbot say. "We've had students who struggled through high school complete their education and go on to excel in post-secondary studies and professional careers."

"I'm supposed to retire in five years," adds Talbot. "Aw, you'll never retire," scoffs Grunert. "You're having too much fun!"



"It seemed like a good idea at the time," said Rod Osiowy, explaining to his fellow Prime Minister's Award recipients how he hired a magician to coach his students at Mount Baker Secondary School in Cranbrook, British Columbia, for a school variety show.

Sparking Learning in Our Students

On the evening of the show, a student — one who had been having trouble in school — proudly showed Osiowy small boxes filled with lighter fluid taped to his palms and the flint and steel contraption taped to his fingers that would set the liquid on fire. But instead of "passing" fire from one hand to the other after flicking his fingers for a spark, nothing happened. "Get the lighter fluid!" the boy exclaimed.

As his teacher squirted lighter fluid into the boxes, the would-be magician nervously continued to flick his fingers. Chaos ensued. The fluid streaming from the can ignited and sprayed the boy who — forgetting the fluid-filled boxes in his hands — frantically tried to put himself out, spreading the fire further. Finally Osiowy threw his burning student to the floor.

"Fortunately, lighter fluid doesn't burn very hot," said Osiowy. "We put the fire out and refilled his boxes. His musical cue came up and he went out on stage and did the trick perfectly!"

That flawless performance, despite the harrowing preview, was a real and significant boost to the young man's self-confidence and his subsequent accomplishments at school, Osiowy recounted, pointing to a computer programming textbook written by his former student. In the book's introduction, the young man refers to the incident as what gave him the confidence to present his work to industry management, boards of directors and the media.

The Spark of Motivation

We all need that spark of motivation. "It's what makes us human," says Osiowy. "Ambition and motivation give us freedom and choice."

"Motivation is central to learning and the love of learning," adds Deb Robinson, principal of Guardian Angels Catholic School in Stittsville, Ontario. "It's the striving for excellence that brings meaning and focus to our lives."

Entrepreneurial Motivation

If motivation were the only key to entrepreneurial success, Carol Livingstone's business education students at Hugh Boyd Secondary School in Richmond, British Columbia, would be leading Canada towards a soaring gross domestic product.

Each year, Livingstone's students are co-owners and operators of a desktop publishing company. They then take on a number of projects and contracts, including designing and producing up to 5000 student agendas for Richmond elementary schools, international brochures and many other design projects for the Richmond school board as well as the 2000–2001 annual report for the British Columbia Securities Commission.

Each position in the company is filled by the student best able to carry it out. "There are prerequisites for the course," Livingstone explains. "Some students will take accounting the year before so they can be the accountant in the business; others will take business management, aiming for the CEO position."

Where do they get the energy and motivation to develop a business so successful that it makes competitors nervous? (At one point, the student business took so many clients away from a national company producing student agendas for the Richmond school district that it approached the class and negotiated a business partnership, which the class accepted.)

"Any necessary pep talks come from the students themselves," Livingstone says with a laugh. But there are several motivating aspects to the program itself, she adds. First, and foremost, is the career development experience the students gain. They are engaged in real work, interacting with professionals on an equal footing. This is enormously challenging, motivating and gratifying. And rewarding. Livingstone's students have earned scholarships and job positions through the experience and contacts made by running their own business.

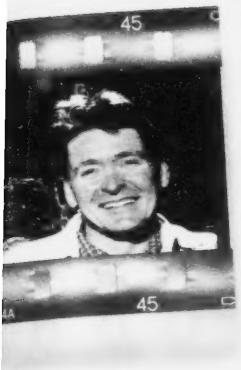
Second, students earn real money working at the company (which, because it is formed in September and dissolved in June, has a different student-chosen name every year). The company pays students a salary, gives a return to stock purchasers of as much as 35 percent and awards scholarships to some students.

And just in case energy may flag a little in the middle of the year, a human resources department gives regular job performance reviews to all company employees. The review criteria are established among all company members at the beginning of the year, so all students know what is expected of them. A strong sense of teamwork and responsibility to the team develops very quickly.

Ross Thompson sees motivation as an energy or force. Though his explanation suggests that he is a physics teacher, he actually teaches music at New Minas Elementary School in New Minas, Nova Scotia. Motivation, he proposes, overcomes mental inertia the way a force overcomes physical inertia. It starts and propels the learning process. A teacher's job is to create the energy that will motivate a student towards learning.

Of course, setting a student on fire is a somewhat unorthodox method of motivation. "And it wasn't on purpose!" insists Osiowy. More conventional methods of motivating students include fostering internal factors, such as the drive to reach a personal goal, curiousity, self-confidence or commitment to a cause. External influences, such as encouragement from a respected adult, the expectations of a team or a group goal, can also motivate a student.

In effect, these factors generate the excitement and energy needed to pursue a goal, explains Carol Livingstone, a business education teacher from Hugh Boyd Secondary School in Richmond, British Columbia. The calm and elegant Livingstone carefully develops both the internal and external factors of motivation in her classes. Then, she laughs, "I just get out of their way" (see "Entrepreneurial Motivation," left).



Rod Osiowy

Mount Baker Secondary School
Cranbrook, British Columbia

"The journey of self-discovery is a rough road for adolescents," says Rod Osiowy. Inspiring students to stay on a path of personal development and personal challenge is, in his opinion, the most important task of teachers. Teaching content and information is secondary when information is everywhere, he explains. Today's essential learning is the will to learn and a desire to make a difference.

What Fuels Motivation?

Tangible rewards such as marks and special privileges can be very successful motivators for students. Thompson, who has the broad chest and melodic voice of a trained opera singer (which he is), develops motivation in his elementary school students through successful hands-on experience with popular instruments, such as recorders, guitars, keyboards and ukuleles, playing the traditional music and folksongs of Atlantic Canada.

Tangible rewards work for older students, too, comments English teacher Mike Hussey from Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto. Just for fun one day, he handed out Tootsie Pops during a pop quiz. His students scored about 10 percent higher than he expected. "I'm not a 'gold star' teacher," Hussey explains. "So I was surprised that a small, simple reward like a Tootsie Pop could have such a profound effect." (For another example of tangible rewards, see "It's Rewarding," right.)

It may have been the personal interest demonstrated by the gift of a Tootsie Pop rather than the candy itself that made the difference, comments Osiowy. Intangible motivators, such as fun, personal satisfaction, interest and encouragement from a respected peer or adult, self-confidence in one's ability to tackle the task and pride in the work, reinforce and increase motivation, he finds.

Osiowy, who calls himself a sponge for learning, likes to use what he calls "subversive activities" to create interest and motivate his theatre, video and acting students (such as using pyrotechnics in a variety show; see "Making a Difference," page 30). "To motivate the

It's Rewarding

Lee Curtis uses a point system with tangible rewards to encourage and motivate his Grade 8 and 9 students in the Langford Alternative Education Program in Victoria, British Columbia. Students and staff evaluate student progress daily, checking for attitude, punctuality, effort, the relationship with peers and staff as well as student participation in cleaning up the classroom. Anything less than a daily score of 65 percent, averaged over a week, is considered unsatisfactory and the student risks suspension from the program. On the other hand, the staff provide movie pass and food coupons to the highest points earner each week and often take students out to lunch as a method of building a relationship.

The students who come to the program are there because they have been unsuccessful in other school settings, Curtis explains. There are a variety of reasons for the lack of success in school. Some of these include Attention Deficit Disorder, Asperger Syndrome (a mild form of autism), a family crisis, abuse or Fetal Alcohol Syndrome — a growing problem and issue in schools today," says Curtis.

"The students need to demonstrate a willingness to be in the program," Curtis explains. "If they don't want to be there, I really can't teach them." Tying clearly defined expectations to a point system helps students learn to show their willingness. Curtis also uses the point system to provide feedback and reinforce basic social skills.

With the same broad expectations for all students — academic success and high school graduation — the class and staff form a family-style relationship, in which the emotional and physical safety of everyone is paramount. Respect between "family members" is expected. Academic goals and plans are clearly defined and organized to allow students to work at their own pace. These factors give the children much-needed structure and stability and allow them to concentrate on studying and learning.

Making a Difference

"I think one of the functions of teachers is to provide some hope for the future for young people," says Rod Osiowy of Mount Baker Secondary School in Cranbrook, British Columbia. One way teachers can create motivation and optimism in their students is to provide real and relevant projects that give students a sense of making a difference in the world, he continues.

As an example, Osiowy points to the videos on environmental and socially relevant themes his video and television students created one year. They sought and developed partnerships with environmental and government agencies to make short video messages about becoming better stewards of the environment, preventing the spread of AIDS, preventing eating disorders, keeping children from smoking, and other topics. The videos were then posted on the Internet to solicit responses from other people.

The project, already successful in inspiring learning and optimism in the students, did not end there. After viewing the Web site, Canada World Youth invited the students to partner with a group of youth from Costa Rica to make similar messages in that country. The Mount Baker students travelled to Costa Rica and with the students there created videos about environmental stewardship, drug use and recycling. The videos are widely used in Costa Rican schools and on television there. One was submitted to a film festival in Costa Rica.

As a result of this partnership, Osiowy's students created presentations for the annual general meeting of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. They applied for and received grants from the Vancouver Foundation to acquire professional video equipment. Students also organized fund-raising campaigns and engaged in video workshops with the National Film Board and Pacific Cinémathèque.

And they have moved beyond sponsored public awareness messages. Osiowy reports that his students have also produced videos highlighting the personal growth and development that has come about through their video projects. Others have organized a youth symposium on water-related issues with guest speakers from across Canada and created their own film festivals on environmental themes.

students, you need to motivate yourself," he says. "I like to take risks, to try things that people have said can't be done and stretch the limits a bit."

With this attitude from their teacher, the students know that in "Rodo's" class they will not be mocked for a mistake nor have their dreams crushed. His students can get caught up in the excitement of learning how to do something innovative and new and are motivated not only to solve the immediate problem, but also to continue to "stretch those limits and keep on learning," he continues.

Is Motivation Everything?

In fact, delayed gratification is an important lesson that students must learn, too. Even while providing intermediate rewards towards a larger goal, it is important to gradually lengthen the "reward span," says elementary principal Robinson. In this way, students learn to reward themselves with intangibles, such as pride and satisfaction in their accomplishments as they work towards a long-term goal.

Carol Livingstone, from the perspective of a secondary school teacher, sees it differently. "If you light the fire, you shouldn't have to keep blowing on it to keep it hot," she says. "Self-motivation comes

Deb Robinson

Guardian Angels Catholic School
Stittsville, Ontario

Every day when Deb Robinson walks into her school, she is reminded of the positive and important influence a teacher can have on a young person's life: two of the teachers at Guardian Angels Catholic School are her former students. Robinson sees her role as principal as that of a servant-leader, bringing energy, compassion and love, creativity and generosity to teachers and students alike.

Carol Livingstone

Hugh Boyd Secondary School
Richmond, British Columbia

One of Carol Livingstone's greatest qualities is her passion for teaching, says her principal. Her students are truly her kids — cared for both as students and, more importantly, as people. She advocates strongly on their behalf and serves as their inspiration and role model. If success can be measured by the quantity and quality of their impact on the lives of others, it is very clear that she has been an extremely successful teacher.

from self-satisfaction. Our job is to teach young people not to depend on others for their motivation."

"Modelling a love of learning yourself and showing students that you're excited and motivated to learn is the real key to motivating students," agrees Robinson, who surely motivates everyone she comes in contact with, since she fairly vibrates with energy and enthusiasm herself.

As the first principal of a new school, Robinson took advantage of the opportunity to build a motivational atmosphere, one that encourages and promotes learning for everyone. Goal setting and self-assessment became the task of everyone in the school, from the smallest Junior Kindergarten student to Robinson herself. She streamlined procedures, focussed staff meetings on professional development, and created teams of teachers to work together on tasks, for example, developing strategies to consistently review children's progress.

Students Set the Rules

"When students take ownership and responsibility for their behaviour, you get a productive classroom," says Kelly Brownrigg, a Grade 6 teacher from Guardian Angels Catholic School in Stittsville, Ontario. "It may not be quiet, but it's really full of learning!"

How can teachers encourage students to be responsible for their behaviour? Brownrigg and fellow Prime Minister's Award recipient Marie Hockley, who is an English and history teacher at Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School in Ridgeway, Ontario, use student-developed codes of conduct.

On the first day of school, Hockley tells her students that she has one rule for her classroom: respect others. She then asks the students to list ways that they can show respect and actions that show disrespect. Next, the personal lists are compiled onto a big piece of paper. Suggestions include "Don't make fun of others" and "Don't interrupt." Hockley's students sign the sheet and a copy is sent to the principal's office.

Brownrigg's class brainstorms a similar list, which is likewise written on large sheets of paper. Brownrigg encourages her students to develop more than behaviour rules and come up with standards for work habits, homework completion, lunchtime, and library and yard times. The rules are written in positive language, such as "We will always be polite to each other," and are posted in a prominent place in the classroom for the first month of school, then kept for supply teachers to review.

This process gives the students a sense of ownership — these are their rules, not ones imposed by the teacher or administration — and a feeling of pride and responsibility, Brownrigg and Hockley explain.

Mission to Succeed

Carol Livingstone and her business education students at Hugh Boyd Secondary School in Richmond, British Columbia, develop a mission statement for their year together running a desktop publishing company. "We look at other mission statements and at what we want to accomplish in the year," she explains. The students brainstorm various possibilities, and together they create, at most, two brief statements outlining their priorities, such as, "We will incorporate our talents, entrepreneurship and enthusiasm into a business that provides the highest quality products to fulfil the needs of our clients. As a company, we are committed to community service and participate when the need arises." This mission statement helps keep the students focussed and motivated through the school year, Livingstone says.

Is Motivation Enough?

Is a teacher who motivates students automatically an excellent teacher? The qualities used to describe a motivational teacher and an excellent teacher are certainly similar: provides immediate feedback and tangible rewards, has a sense of humour, builds a strong relationship with the students and gives students the freedom to express themselves and explore new avenues.

"There's more to an excellent teacher than just the ability to motivate the students," answers Robinson. "An excellent teacher balances motivation with academic expectations." In her experience, the teacher who really challenges the students to reach their full potential academically and personally does so with rigorous standards and high expectations. A great teacher and a great motivator has an extensive knowledge and love of the subject and

Fabrication in Learning

Doug MacCorkindale uses an unusual technique to create interest and motivation in his technology classes at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto. "I lie to them," he says seriously. "I hide a miscalculation or an outright falsehood in the middle of an explanation. "If the students are paying attention and really thinking, they'll catch the mistake," he says. They will also learn the material more thoroughly than if he had just handed it to them. "It's a bit of a game," he chuckles. "I challenge them to challenge me, catch my deliberate mistakes and then prove me wrong."

Ross Thompson

New Minas Elementary School
New Minas, Nova Scotia

"It's all pennies in the bank," laughs Ross Thompson. Every lesson learned, no matter how small, is another penny in a student's "bank" of skills, confidence and knowledge. He encourages and inspires students with hands-on experience using a wide variety of instruments and musical games, leads them to explore beyond their perceived limits and tells each one, "I care. You're special." And by the time each child leaves Thompson's class, they are rich.

creates fresh, innovative strategies for teaching and learning. Even though students sometimes avoid these teachers because they think their classes will be too hard, they are the ones who turn students on to lifelong learning.

Even with a successful, interesting program, the teacher's respect and interest in the student, good team spirit in the class and attractive rewards, not every student will be motivated all the time, Thompson points out. "Sometimes the wood is wet. There's not enough time to get through to the student, you're just not the right teacher for that student or the student has too much else to cope with in his life."

But you never know when a lesson you teach will light the spark of interest, motivation and excitement about learning, concludes Helen Pat Hansen from Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Stittsville, Ontario. "When I was in school, I learned about the Coriolis effect — that weather patterns rotate counterclockwise in the Southern Hemisphere. At the time, it didn't strike me as anything important." Only years later, on a trip to Australia, did the lesson and its implications resurface. "There I was, bouncing around a hotel room in Sydney, all excited because the water was swirling the opposite way down the drain!"

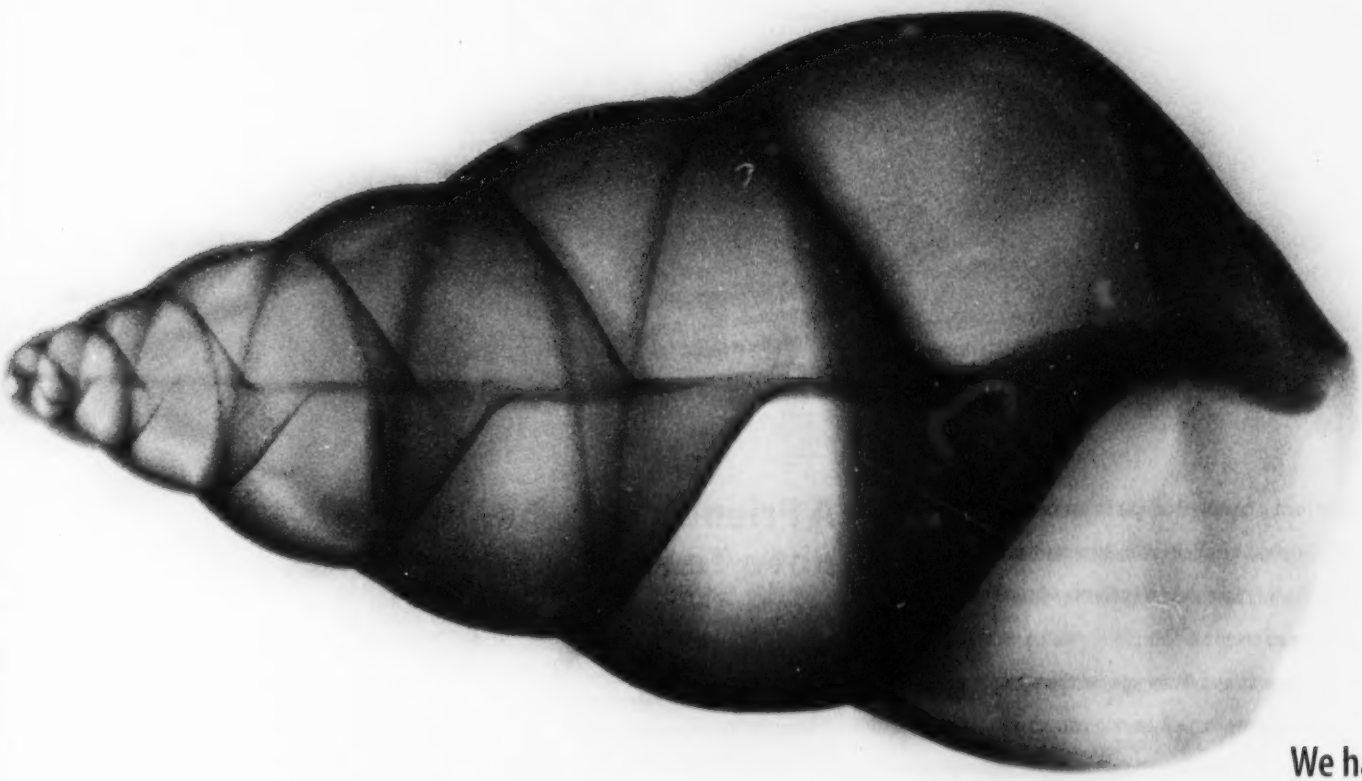
A Friendly Teacher, not a Teacherly Friend

Even though he tells his students — and means it — that "I am your teacher, not your friend," Mike Hussey's English classroom at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto is not a completely sombre and serious place.

Not when attendance must be answered with four words in iambic pentameter, a line from a favourite song or an alliterative phrase once a week. ("I tell them the day before how to answer attendance," Hussey explains. "It keeps them on their toes.") Or when, at any time, students may be surprised with an unusual project such as the Great Egg Drop. (First, for no apparent reason, English students are required to design a package that protects two eggs through a 40-metre drop. Then, they are assigned an essay on group dynamics and it makes sense.)

Students work to meet Hussey's approval with jokes, which must be original, about their teacher's socks (he teaches without shoes), hair (he is bald) and coffee (he is never without it). They can also challenge their teacher's (deliberately) illogical and invalid arguments at any time with, "Excuse me sir, but with all respect, I believe that's crap." But they had better be able to prove it!

This apparently riotous but carefully constructed atmosphere has helped make Hussey's courses among the most popular in the school, putting students at their ease, encouraging them to think creatively and critically and stretching them to excel. "It's all part of the art of classroom management," grins Hussey, who presents seminars on this "art" to student teachers.



We have

come a long way from rows of docile students routinely

chanting multiplication tables in a one-room schoolhouse.

Today's classroom is full of inquiry and activity, bright with

posters and artwork, noisy with voices, music and the hum

of computers, printers and scanners.

Another Look at the Honour Roll

The curriculum has travelled a long way, too. Education's focus has shifted from simply teaching the subject to teaching the child, developing not only academic skills and knowledge but also personal and interpersonal skills, a love of learning and self-confidence in the whole child.

Yet the methods for assessing students' success in this new environment sometimes seem to hark back to that one-room schoolhouse. Marks are still the first thing students, parents and potential employers look at when measuring student success.

"Marks are useful," says Marie Hockley, an English and history teacher from Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School in Ridgeway, Ontario, "but a 92 percent average isn't the only thing a student needs." A mark only measures one part of the learning process, she says. Marks cannot necessarily prove anything useful about a student's ability to solve a new problem, work in a team or learn independently.

"Marks are only one snapshot of a student's ability, not a panoramic indication of their personal worth," comments Mike Hussey, who teaches English at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto. He suggests that marks survive as a means of measuring student progress and success because they are easy to manipulate and codify, not because they give the best indication of a student's overall capabilities.

Marks do not even accurately portray a student's academic knowledge. Every teacher uses different criteria — a B+ assignment to one teacher is an A to another — and every student has different capabilities. Elementary students will have different abilities from secondary students, and English as a Second Language students will have different benchmarks of success from those of native-born Canadians.

In addition, when we focus on marks and "teach to the exam," we are overlooking important aspects of education, and potentially run the risk of limiting our children's futures, warns Kelly Brownrigg, a Grade 6 teacher at Guardian Angels Catholic School in Stittsville, Ontario.

Marie Hockley

Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School
Ridgeway, Ontario

"My goal is to build my students' confidence in themselves so that they will take risks, and develop and defend their own interpretations of the material. I believe you must model this kind of behaviour to your students by letting them know about your projects and letting them see you trying new things and taking risks. I am teaching a lot more than English; I am teaching kids, and I take my job very seriously."

Language Challenges for ESL Students

As hard as it may be to leave the country of their birth (and in many cases, their family, too) English as a Second Language students face an even harder challenge when they enter a Canadian high school. "There's more to passing an ESL course and eventually graduating from high school than simply learning the language," says Mary Lou Mastromonaco, who teaches ESL at Bishop Grandin High School in Calgary.

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) can be learned within a few months, she explains. BICS refers to the language necessary to communicate on a social level, to sustain everyday conversation. Much harder to acquire is Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which can take between five and seven years to develop. This is the level of language proficiency required to succeed on an academic level and earn a high school diploma.

Even after completing the ESL program, students are routinely reading and writing below grade level. They require continued language support, particularly to cope in language-laden courses. Therefore, Mastromonaco developed what she calls "adjunct courses" for the regular stream English courses her school offers. In an adjunct course, Mastromonaco spends 80 minutes a day previewing the regular course material, helping students develop reading and writing skills and providing the necessary cultural context and background to study material. Since frequent consultation sessions with the regular course teacher keep her informed of any specific difficulties her ESL students are having, she addresses these areas in the adjunct class as well.

This initiative, combined with a mentoring and tutoring program that matches teams of Canadian students with an ESL student, has lifted the graduation rate of new Canadians enrolled at Bishop Grandin.

Mark-based education does not accommodate different learning styles or academic abilities and tends to select and reward one type of student over others, Brownrigg points out. And teaching to the exam neglects important lessons about character development, work habits and personal growth. Students can graduate with good marks and still be incapable of succeeding in the workplace.

Goals and Student Success

"A better indication of success than marks," suggests Mary Lou Mastromonaco, "is to look at a student's self-awareness. Are they aware of their academic strengths and weaknesses? Do they know how to address them?" Mastromonaco, who brings both skill and calm confidence to her teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) at Bishop Grandin High School in Calgary, adds that for her students another sign of success is making a good adjustment to life in Canada and the busy social atmosphere of a large, multicultural high school. (To learn more, see "Language Challenges for ESL Students," left.)

Students who know their abilities and apply them positively to improve themselves have a big advantage in all learning, agrees Jean-Daniel Roy, a Grade 5 teacher at École Sainte-Anne in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Not only do they develop self-confidence and a love of learning, they are the ones who easily absorb and assimilate new information and get the good marks!

A better evaluation of students' progress can be made by looking at their goal-setting skills, suggests Brownrigg. Students who can set a reasonable, attainable goal for themselves and then plan how to reach it are students who are developing the skills and knowledge they will need for success now and in later life.

Brownrigg encourages her elementary students to set their sights on developing and improving their skills. Her students make specific and detailed goals for themselves — for example, "I want to increase the vivid detail in my writing" — and set out criteria to measure whether they meet the goal — for example, "I've used at least one adjective in each sentence."

"Then we follow up with continuous assessment to make sure each student is meeting the goals they've set for themselves," Brownrigg explains. Even at the elementary level, students can become quite skilled at developing criteria for rubrics and assessing their own progress and success, she affirms. (For more about Brownrigg's goal-setting exercises, see "OGIM: Oh Good, It's Monday!" page 39)

"Students can learn to determine and measure their own success," agrees Marie Hockley. She supplies her high school students with templates focussed on writing skills and rubrics to evaluate their written and oral presentations. In addition, fellow students review oral presentations, offering constructive feedback and strategies for improvement. Hockley's clear expectations coupled with these rubrics and review procedures rapidly develop skilled and confident writers.

Hockley also uses cooperative teaching strategies in her class to teach academic material and personal development at the same time. "Home groups" of four or five students work together after school on an assignment and develop a question on the material. The next day in class, expert groups, comprised of one member from each home group, answer all five questions. These answers are the students' only notes on the material. Students are accountable to each other and evaluate each other's work, with the expert group sometimes writing the unit test.

All the teachers see goal-based success as more rewarding, involved and detailed than success gained through an exam and mark-based system. "Students learn what success feels like as they achieve their personal short-term goals. And they learn what they need to do to achieve their next success," says Brownrigg.

And it is ultimately more satisfying and permanent, adds Mastromonaco. "My ESL students literally and figuratively have no voice when they arrive at our school," she says. "They know this. It can be a crushing thing for them."

But as they learn to express themselves in English, begin to work with other students, learn to express their own opinions and

Rewarding Community Service

Developing good interpersonal skills is an important part of success in life. For some students, especially high-risk students, developing these skills and the self-confidence that goes only with them can be a difficult challenge.

"Tough kids, or rather kids who think they're tough, get perspective on life by helping others," says Lee Curtis, who runs the Langford Alternative Education Program in Victoria, an alternative school program for Grade 8 and 9 students. Volunteer work helps teach his students these valuable life skills.

For an hour a week, the Langford students visit a local seniors' home. While there, they sing for the seniors, usually war-time drinking songs, smiles Curtis. "That seems to be what's most popular." The seniors sing along or listen with great enjoyment. After the sing-along, the students spend a few minutes talking to the seniors. They learn first-hand accounts of the history they have only encountered before in books. They hear about difficulties and tragedies that others have survived. They see that the seniors still need and want social contact.

There are great intangible rewards to this program, explains Curtis. The students learn compassion, empathy and patience. They learn about the disabilities of others and learn to appreciate the contribution that the seniors made to society in the past. It opens their eyes to the contributions they can make themselves in the future.

Kelly Brown

Guardian Angels Cathol
Stittsville

"Students can only learn the qualities of respect, responsibility and resou
through teachers who model tolerance, understanding, compassion and
reflective attitude. As an educator, I encourage my students to develop
attitudes and knowledge necessary to contribute to a healthy society. As
educator, I endeavour to provide a foundation for students to grow in their
compassion, commitment and conviction

Success in a Second Language Feels Just as Good

Knowing your students' strengths as well as your own helps promote success in the classroom, says Valerie Pike.

Pike, who teaches languages at Prince of Wales Collegiate in St. John's, builds on her own strengths and those of her students by designing learning activities that address a wide range of learning styles, open new avenues of learning and lead students towards improving their skill and proficiency.

For example, to strengthen her students' French-language reading abilities and their appreciation for literature and the arts, she presents a video of the French version of the popular musical *Les Misérables* while they study Victor Hugo's classic novel. Period artwork, posters and other visual aids also deepen their understanding of the novel and its historical and social context.

"When students discover that reading a text in another language can bring a new perspective to their understanding of the story, another dimension to their learning and a broader appreciation of history and culture, not only are they motivated to work hard, they succeed," explains Pike.

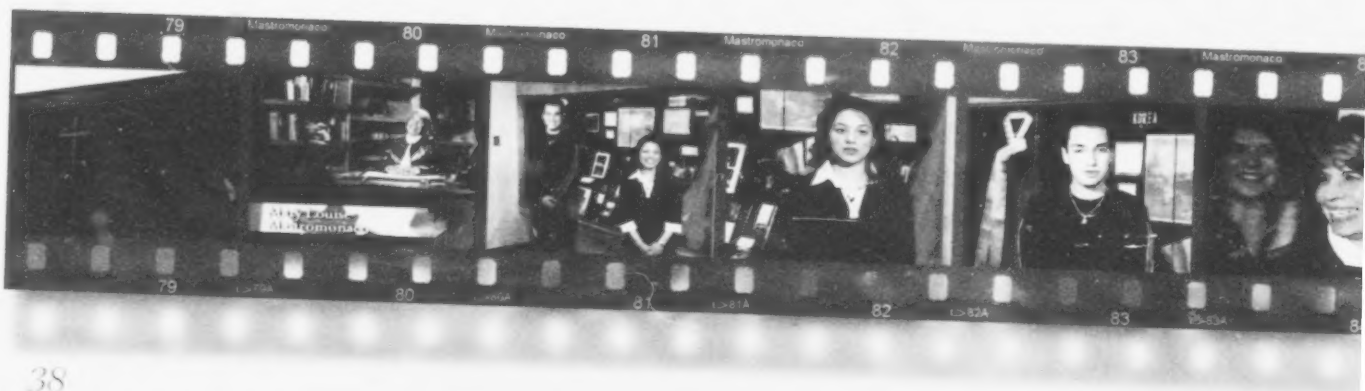
And when you hand the students a really challenging exercise, such as reading the original text of *Les Misérables*, she says, you are expressing confidence in them. You are telling them, "I know you can do this."

dreams (something they may have never been allowed to do before) and learn to respect the opinions and feelings of others, they begin to find their voice.

To promote this process of finding both their voice and achieving success in their new country, Mastromonaco has developed a number of activities that act as multicultural awareness-building exercises, as well as language lessons for her students. For example, teams of students — all from different countries — create display cases highlighting one student's country of origin with artwork, maps, traditional clothing and headdresses, artifacts and written descriptions. "Often, I'll try to put students from countries with a history of conflict together on one team," says Mastromonaco. "As they work together, they gain an understanding and respect for each other's culture."

The Honour Roll

As well as developing academic knowledge, students need to develop the strengths and qualities of a trustworthy, reliable, honest, respectful person, Brownrigg, Hockley and Mastromonaco agree. We all need to learn how to be a good leader, a responsible team member, a careful, conscientious worker, and to build positive



attitudes, critical examination skills and good team skills. None of these attributes is developed while memorizing the capitals of the world or chemical formulae.

The honour roll should refer to both academic success and success in character development. "We need good people as much as we need smart people, maybe more," comments Brownrigg. And school is the best place to develop these attributes, says Hockley. "We provide a gentler and more controlled way to learn than the School of Hard Knocks."

Teachers can lead the way towards this new version of the Honour Roll by acting as role models for their students.

In her classroom, Brownrigg's teaching style centres around education's new Three Rs: responsible, respectful and resourceful. She encourages her students to develop good manners, accountability, respect and a positive attitude — all vital to learning — by demonstrating these behaviours herself. High school teachers deal with young people at a time of rapid personal growth, comment Hockley and Mastromonaco. "There's lots of opportunity to make a positive impact on a student's life," says Hockley.

"I think I've succeeded as a teacher," says Hockley, "when my students realize that I'm teaching them more than the curriculum."

OGIM: Oh Good, It's Monday!

Monday morning is goal-setting time in Kelly Brownrigg's Grade 6 class at Guardian Angels Catholic School in Stittsville, Ontario. Students set academic and personal relationship goals for the week and develop strategies to achieve those goals. They also reflect on their previous week's goals — were they achieved and if so, how? For example, "We look for a 'plus' — something that's really good — and a 'delta' — something that's improved — from the previous week's assignments and plan for them in the coming week's work," Brownrigg explains. "Just 15 minutes every Monday morning helps focus the children on having a successful week," Brownrigg says.

Confidence-building Performances

"Every time I set out with a carload of students, I heard the same thing," laughs Nancy Barkhouse, describing her weekly trips to a local radio station for an airing of Surf's Up, the weekly hour-long radio show her Grade 4 students at Atlantic View Elementary School in Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia, wrote and produced one year. "They were so nervous, they felt sick. They wanted to go home and they weren't sure if they could go through with the show."

But as soon as they walked through the studio door they became little professionals, she says. Good preparation, plenty of practice and team spirit helped them focus on the job at hand. Each and every performance was flawless, and the students' pride in their success lasted for the rest of the school year.

The success-building effect of Surf's Up extended to the rest of the school when taping took place there, Barkhouse recounts. The whole school gained knowledge and skill about radio technology and public performance. In one especially memorable incident, while taping a primary class interview about snow, an autistic boy who had never spoken in class before when she was there volunteered, "I like to build snowmen."

Carl Goulding, whose award-winning choirs hail from Mount Pearl Intermediate School and Mount Pearl Senior High School in Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador, remembers similar progress among his choristers. "From the shy girl who had no friends to the boy who wasn't sure if dancing was cool, I saw the same development of confidence." Choir members choose the music, create their own choreography and run their own rehearsals, developing strong and permanent confidence in themselves because they see how to learn and earn respect, says Goulding. "They gain personal confidence through gaining confidence as a group."

Mary Lou Mastromonaco

Bishop Grandin High School
Calgary, Alberta

"I take great pleasure in creating 'aha!' moments for my students, moments and adventures that help them understand and enter Canadian life. It is a challenge at times to stay balanced and effective in the midst of their ever-changing and overwhelming needs. But having said that, for me, life is always a fine balancing act — one that I will forever be trying to master! I feel tremendously fortunate to teach English as a Second Language students. It is an honour and a joy to be both welcoming committee and early guide to their Canadian adventure."

Making the most of what technology can off
education, while reminding students that machin
are no substitute for critical thought, discussion an
emotional exploration, is a real and pressin
challenge for teacher

Kids and Keyboards

The Human Side of Technology in Education

And it is a challenge that teachers meet in a variety of ways. Some embrace and welcome technology into their classrooms, confident that creativity and critical thinking skills will take care of themselves. Others ban technology from their classrooms entirely and insist that students learn without technology's "bells and whistles." Most strive to balance these two impulses and use technology as one of many teaching tools.

But as the classroom and workplace grow increasingly dominated and dependent upon technology, it can be difficult to preserve this balance. Before bringing a human perspective to technology, teachers must first consider, is there a human side to technology?

"Technology is any tool that facilitates a human's action. It always requires a person to operate it so it always maintains a human side," says Helen Pat Hansen, who teaches law, communications and technology, and travel and tourism at Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Stittsville, Ontario. Lively and earnest, Hansen is also a member of the Tech-Connect team, which brings students from Guardian Angels Catholic School and Sacred Heart together through several cross-grade technology projects (see "Tech Connects Schools and Kids," page 42).

Teachers need to identify and maintain a human side or dimension in teaching with and about technology. Now that we have robotic factories and an automatic function on virtually every piece of machinery, it is easy for students (and teachers!) to forget that each machine was originally designed and created by a human being.

Tech Connects Schools and Kids

"We were looking for a way to put the children's paper portfolios onto CDs," Deb Robinson explains. Robinson is the principal of Guardian Angels Catholic School in Stittsville, Ontario. She and Kelly Brownrigg, who teaches Grade 6 at Guardian Angels, knew the educational value of portfolios to motivate and excite students about their progress in school. They thought it would be more efficient and interesting to transfer the portfolios to an electronic medium.

"We thought it was a good idea, but we didn't have any idea how to do it," says Robinson. So, the teachers of Guardian Angels turned to the students and teachers of Sacred Heart Catholic High School. They met Helen Pat Hansen, who teaches communications and technology and Matt Dawber, who besides teaching English and music, leads the information technology team at the school.

The foursome established Tech-Connect, a partnership between the two schools in the areas of arts education and technology. Robinson, Brownrigg, Dawber and Hansen use the flexibility and challenge of communications technology to create an interschool link, one that emphasizes multi-age student peer coaching, professional development, teamwork and employability skills. This program brings older and younger students together to give all students a chance to acquire communication, creative problem solving, collaboration and technology skills.

Currently, there are four projects in the Tech-Connect program. As each project grows to include more students in each school ("We started small, with six students in the Grade 6 class creating electronic portfolios," says Brownrigg.), the team uses the "train the trainer" technique to train other teachers, groups of parent volunteers and the students themselves.

KinderCreations

This project links the objectives of the Junior Kindergarten curriculum with skills development and computer use at the high school level. After discussion with Hansen, Grade 12 communications and technology students developed software to help the younger students create stories. As the JK students told their stories, the older students helped them put the words into their pre-made templates. The senior students also helped the little ones import graphics to illustrate their stories. The young students developed language and technology skills. The older students were able to field test their new software and learn the challenges and rewards of tutoring and mentoring.

Recording Session

Another opportunity to link learning opportunities for senior and elementary students was inspired by the idea of recording a Guardian Angels school song. The Sacred Heart music students, under Dawber's guidance, organized a recording session for the Guardian Angels school choir. Aside from learning patience, the junior students all learned about the need to practise performance skills, and discovered the role technology plays in the recording industry. The senior students learned to develop their creativity, their knowledge of recording technology and their ability to interact and motivate people of different ages.

Electronic Portfolios

Electronic portfolios, the initial inspiration for the Tech-Connect program, are now used throughout Guardian Angels, and are hosted on the school's Web site, accessible from home or school. "As far as I know, we're the only school doing this," says Robinson. Both elementary and secondary staff participated in professional development sessions to promote and support the use of portfolios in the classroom. Students and teachers learn to set and achieve goals, develop specific criteria for assessing work and identify areas that need improvement. Parent volunteers help the students scan their work and prepare it for inclusion in their electronic portfolios. They also schedule the equipment use and supervise the students using the equipment.

Back to School

This project was founded to inform parents about the student assessment procedures at Guardian Angels. In the first case, Sacred Heart communications and technology students helped the elementary students produce a series of videos. Both age groups were involved in writing, producing, directing, shooting and editing the videos. Everyone learned the importance of teamwork, how to identify and solve problems and how to present information in a clear and easy-to-understand way.

Lee Curtis

Langford Alternative Education Program
Victoria, British Columbia

Lee Curtis is inspired by the changes in his students when they gain a clear recognition of their strengths. He believes that positive role models and an organized, respectful and encouraging environment are essential for student success. In addition, he ensures that community service is part of each student's learning, since opportunities to be deeply proud foster positive self-image, which, in turn, positively influences academic learning. Curtis' greatest satisfaction comes when former students visit and tell him about their successes and adventures in life.

Doug MacCorkindale's project design students at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto do not forget this aspect of the human side of technology. They learn first hand about technology's relationship with the creative process. MacCorkindale's students have designed and built everything from a prosthetic device that allowed a disabled student to hold a hockey stick to models of the Special Purpose Dexterous Manipulator, the "hand" attached to the end of the Canadarm2.

The students also learn about how technology works against human creativity. "We talk about the dehumanizing aspects of modern technology at great length in my classes," MacCorkindale says. "Whenever a device is made to a standard size, or option packages are offered rather than real choice, human creativity and flexibility are eliminated." He then shows his students how the human side can be brought back into technology. As part of the course, students discuss and then design and build adjustable and ergonomic controls.

Jean-Daniel Roy, a Grade 5 teacher at École Sainte-Anne in Sherbrooke, Quebec, took a different approach to finding the human side of technology. He used technology to build satisfying, beneficial human relationships between his students and students on the other side of the world. Over four years, his Échange Scolaire Québec-France project prepared students for an exchange trip to France. They held video conferences with their partners in France, carried on extensive e-mail correspondence, and built a special Web site to share their plans and research with their exchange partners, family and friends (see "A Virtual Project Becomes Real," page 21).

Technology's Mark on Teaching

Once a human dimension of technology is identified, how can teachers use it in their teaching?

"I think that the Internet and new information technology are extraordinary ways to validate and use written language in everyday life, to connect us together," says Roy. Many educational experiences suddenly become possible because of technology's potential, he explains.

The youthful and soft-spoken Roy is excited by the impact technology can have on teaching. He knows first-hand how it can broaden students' horizons and quite literally show them a different part of the world.

Using the Internet is a matter of reading and writing, Roy continues (at least until newer technology allows us to speak to our computers and listen to the Internet). Since much of learning relies on reading and writing, modern communications technology presents marvellous learning opportunities for teachers and students. The possibility of writing to an audience, of creating something that many people will view or of writing to someone who will respond to you or comment on is very different from writing for a mark, he explains.

He organized many such activities in the course of his foreign exchange program. For example, his students prepared for video conferences with their French counterparts by thinking up questions to ask them, as well as by anticipating and researching what questions the French students might ask them. This was learning for a real purpose and that made it more relevant and interesting for the students. "Just using the technology was not the

Technology Aids Second Language Learning

"Technology gives students opportunities to learn about others," says Valerie Pike, a languages teacher at Prince of Wales Collegiate in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, pointing to her students' international research projects as an example. "It can certainly bring an added dimension to learning another language." Her Grade 12 students prepare a classroom presentation about a Francophone country, using Internet research and presentation tools such as PowerPoint and Corel. Pike explains that given the freedom to create whatever style of presentation they wish within the assignment guidelines the results show great creativity as well as comprehension of the subject and language. "The technology skills are secondary aims in such projects," she comments. "It is the access to the vast second-language resources offered on the Internet and the enhancement of second-language skills that are the primary goals."

Another example of technology's aid to learning was a distance learning project Pike spearheaded in partnership with Memorial University. Core French classes from Newfoundland held hour-long telephone conferences with students in Quebec and New Brunswick. Using their second language, each group of students discussed a pre-determined topic. This program was tremendously successful for participating high school Core French students.

educational goal. All the preparation was the real education," Roy comments. As long as this distinction is clear, there is no problem keeping a human side to technology. (For another teacher's use of technology in language learning, see "Technology Aids Second Language Learning," left.)

Helen Pat Hansen sees integrating technology across the curriculum as an exciting new way for students to both increase their skills in communication and collaboration and to be creative.

For example, one of the Stittsville team's projects, KinderCreations, brought together Kindergarten students with a story to tell and high school students with publishing software to create and produce short storybooks based on the theme of exotic animals. Both groups of students gained from this project. The high school students were able to field test and refine their software through contact with real users. The Kindergarten students developed language skills in a real and exciting project. Part of the process of emphasizing the human side of technology, Hansen explains, is encouraging the children to understand and be able to explain the process — the human manipulation of the tool — they have used to achieve a result. (To find out about another multi-age collaborative project, see "Composition in Virtual Interactive Classrooms," right.)

Helen Pat Hansen

Sacred Heart Catholic High School
Stittsville, Ontario

"I believe that all education has value. We base our actions on what we have learned and what has practical value for us. I believe that knowledge is of even more value when the learning process is shared and the understanding for all is increased. I teach because I believe it is a privilege to share my knowledge with my students and colleagues. Our students are our future and we have the unique privilege of serving them today."

But is this true in every classroom? Is technology always the best way to help students learn? Lee Curtis, who runs the Langford Alternative Education Program in Victoria, thinks perhaps not. His program, which prepares high-risk Grade 8 and 9 students to return to and succeed in the regular school system, focusses on developing the attitudes and skills these students need to cope with the many challenges in their lives. Though he admits that technology has some valuable contributions to make to this process (his students learn keyboarding and use computers for some self-paced study units in science, language arts and math), just as often his students need better homework habits, community awareness, reading practice and positive social interactions to improve their academic standing.

"I do have a telephone and a fax machine in my classroom, but I do not have an e-mail address on site," he says. "I'd rather spend my time working one-on-one with the kids than reading bulk-copied messages."

Curtis began his alternative school teaching with woodworking classes for Grade 10 students. He sees the learning curve of woodworking as appropriate for that of technology. "First you start with basic skills and hand tools. You learn to use them and take care of them," he explains. "Then you move to power tools, learning to respect their power and to make full use of their capabilities. Finally, you take on a big project and work with a team of other builders."

Making the best educational use of technology is a learning curve for teachers and school administrators as well as for students, comments Hansen. When the teacher is as willing as the student to

Composition in Virtual Interactive Classrooms

At New Minas Elementary School in New Minas, Nova Scotia, children's musical expression takes shape through an innovative program called Composition in Virtual Interactive Classrooms (CIVIC). "Composing on the computer avoids the technical difficulties of small motor control and learning musical notation," explains music teacher Ross Thompson. "The students can jump right into making music."

Students use a composition program called Sibelius to compose original music. Using templates Thompson designed, students have a solid starting point from which to begin their compositional efforts. The templates set the key signature, time signature and musical structure of the student's work. When the piece is completed to his or her satisfaction, the student uploads it to the Acadia University server along with a description of the work, outlining the mood and tempo he or she is striving to achieve.

There, the work and description is reviewed by Jeff Hennesey, a composer. He replies to the student via e-mail suggesting ways to bring the musical composition closer to what the child intends. "Whenever possible, Jeff teaches musical concepts, expanding the student's knowledge of musical forms and styles," Thompson explains. The piece goes back and forth between New Minas and Acadia as many times as the student wishes, he adds.

In the first year, about 60 students at New Minas Elementary School pilot tested the program. Now in its second year, the program is used by 100 students and by five other teachers around the province. Many other teachers are expressing interest in joining as soon as possible. The music department at Acadia University now uses the CIVIC program as part of its student-teacher training.

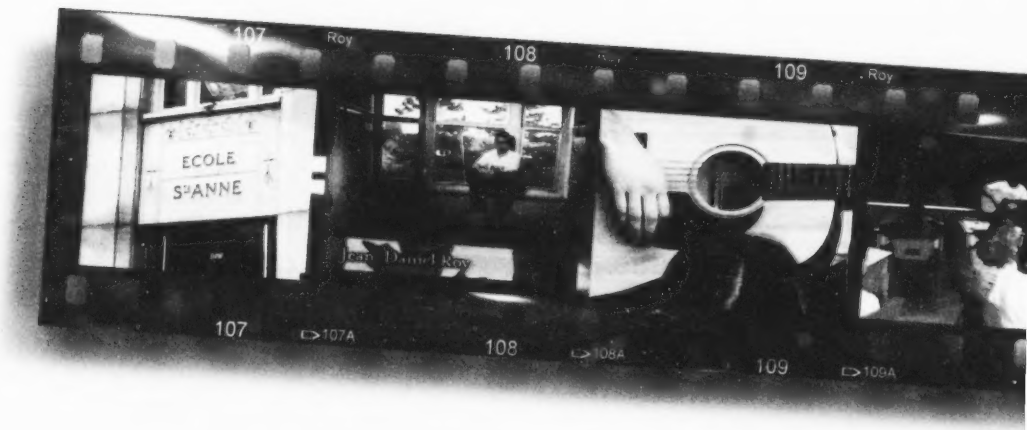
Carl Goulding uses a similar system at Mount Pearl Intermediate School and Mount Pearl Senior High School in Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador. Called Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI), it allows students to bypass the complications of composition on paper. MIDI records notes played on a synthesizer, on a musical instrument with a special MIDI port, or on a computer with composition software, and arranges them into the proper musical notation. "It gives a visual aid to their composition skills," says Goulding," and helps the students to hear and correct their 'mistakes' more easily."

make mistakes, learn new approaches to a subject or problem and ask other teachers or students for assistance, then the student quickly sees technology's potential for exploration and new ways of learning, she asserts.

Striving for Balance

Computers and other technologies are obviously here to stay. "What we really need to do is learn to balance technology in our lives and remember that it's just another tool in a wide range of educational tools," says Hansen. "Technology should be used to enhance and augment academic learning, not replace it."

Technology can augment traditional learning. For example, the increase in communications made possible by technology has also meant an increase in worthless, time-wasting communications, such as spam, junk mail and "soap box" Web sites. Hansen suggests



Doug MacCorkindale

Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute
Toronto, Ontario

After 29 years of teaching, Doug MacCorkindale says he has seen more changes in our educational system than he has seen in students. "Students have an avid desire to learn," he says. And he wants to teach them. MacCorkindale advocates with equal determination and confidence for technology and skilled, trades-based education, for apprenticeship programs and for the capable, talented students overlooked or unsuccessful in an education system increasingly focussed on academics and modern computer technology.

that "we can use this as an opportunity to teach research, filtering and critical assessment skills."

Unless carefully monitored, technology can replace authentic academic learning. The technology that helps us connect, such as e-mail and the Internet, can also lead us to isolation, since it promotes solitary reading and writing. To counter this tendency, "I never allow students to work alone," says MacCorkindale. "They've got to learn teamwork and respect for each other as much as they need to learn how to read an engineering plan or work a lathe."

It is all about balance. To retain the human side of technology, the increase of technology in the school and the workplace must be balanced against solid academic learning, and the tendency towards isolation must be balanced with an awareness of our need for social contact and relationships and the benefits of teamwork.

Just-in-Time Teaching

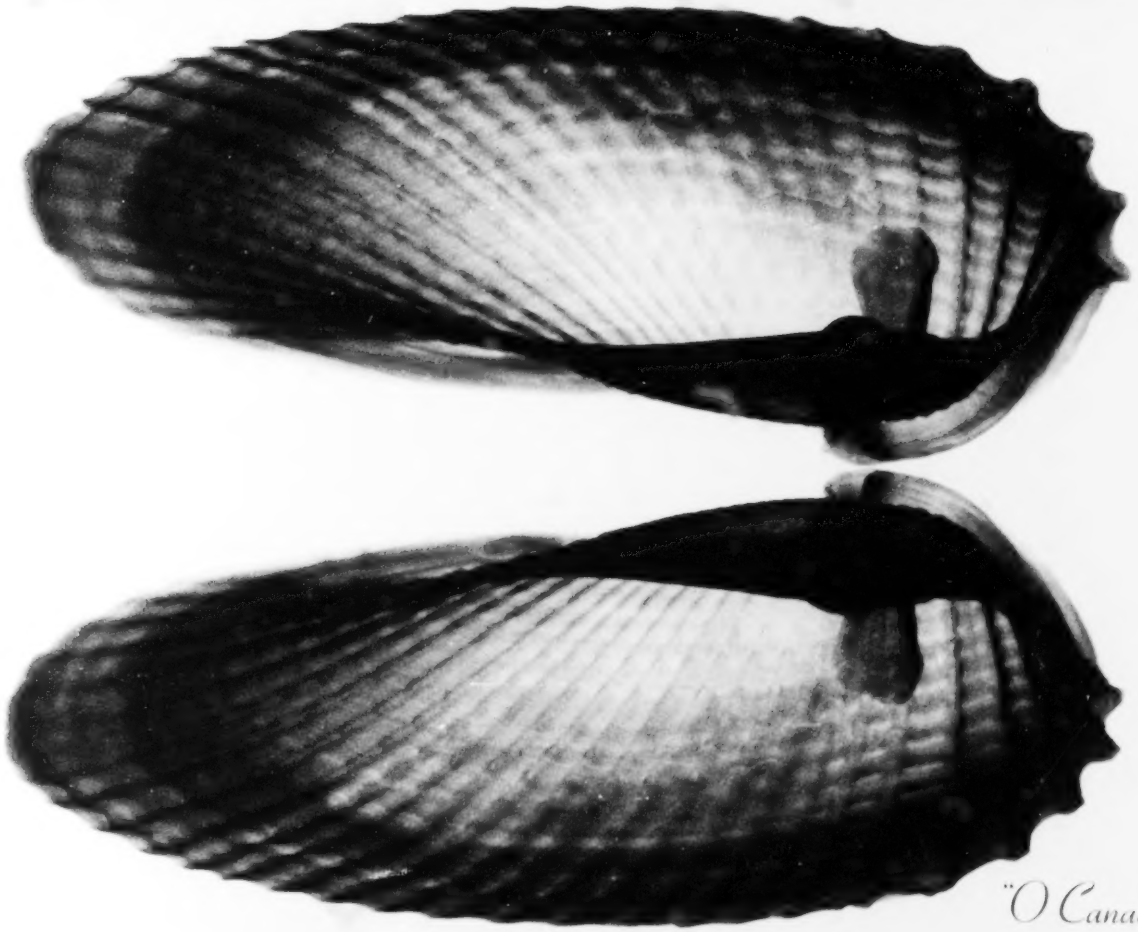
What better way to teach the "just-in-time" system of efficient inventory control than to use it in the classroom? Instead of supplying manufacturing materials as needed, though, Doug MacCorkindale supplies his technology students at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto with the skills and knowledge they need just in time to complete a new task.

MacCorkindale's classroom teaching is based on practical hands-on exercises and teamwork to foster and develop the self-efficacy of his students. When a team of students is assigned a task, to design or build a piece of machinery, for example, MacCorkindale allows them to work as long as they can without assistance, practising and perfecting the skills and knowledge they already have. Eventually and inevitably, though, the team will meet a challenge it cannot solve on its own. It is time for some "just-in-time" teaching. This self-directed learning technique creates interest and focus in the students because, faced with an immediate puzzle, they are highly motivated to learn the relevant skill or fact, MacCorkindale explains.

Jean-Daniel Roy

École Sainte-Anne
Sherbrooke, Quebec

Jean-Daniel Roy believes that it is possible to maintain friendly relations with pupils while imparting a clear understanding of the limits and roles of teacher and pupil. "I try to have a personal relationship with each one of my pupils, but they know what I expect of them and what I don't tolerate. In my opinion, one doesn't exclude the other."



"O Canada"

What is a Canadian education? "I've wondered about this question for a long time," says Valerie Pike, "and so far I have more questions than answers."

What is a Canadian Education?

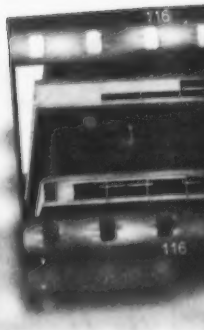
Pike brings an interesting perspective to this issue. Thoughtful, curious and intensely interested in the process of learning, she has developed an international studies program at Prince of Wales Collegiate in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The program currently has two components: an international studies course that includes a linguistic and cultural immersion component in Cuba, and a Russian studies course that includes a similar program in Russia. In her travels with her students, she has seen first-hand the difference in the education of young people in various countries.

For example, while in Cuba, the Canadian students were asked to choose a Canadian name for a park created to commemorate their visit. Her students found the task challenging. They had to search their joint knowledge of the historical and cultural signposts that define our country and make a meaningful selection. At the same time, Pike's students were struck by their Cuban friends, who seemed to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of Cuba's history and culture.

Should not one of the primary aims of our education system, Pike wonders, be to enable our young people to understand and appreciate their country and its significance in the world? An important focus of a Canadian education ought to be the development of proud and informed citizens, not solely workers, she suggests.

Mike Hussey

Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute
Toronto, Ontario



"If we, as teachers, have a duty, it is to be the giants on whose shoulders our students may stand. I believe that real learning only occurs in a structured environment, one that encourages and supports critical thinking and risk, as well as taking a poke at the paradigm. Thus, I am unrepentantly Socratic, calculatingly eccentric, bemusing, amusing and confusing — a baiding, boisterous but gentle bear. I 'raise the bar' endlessly but gently. I respect the awesome power a teacher possesses — the classroom, however defined, is the womb of many worlds. I think, and hope, that I use that power well."

Creative Arrogance in Writing

The communication of ideas and opinions is essential to civic participation, says Mike Hussey from Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto. "But too many people, including many teachers, are paralyzed by a fear of language." Their fear of being judged by their use of language inhibits them from sharing and defending their ideas, he continues.

By the time his English students leave his class, they do not have that problem. A minimum of two writing assignments a week has transformed them into skilled and confident writers armed with what Hussey calls "creative arrogance," the conviction that "not only can I tell people this, I should tell them! They need to hear it from me."

Hussey teaches the two aspects of writing — how to write and how to think — simultaneously in an English course disguised as Ethics and Moral Reasoning.

Science uses the scientific method to express itself and mathematics uses the language and grammar of numbers. Neither could advance the course of human learning with sloppy or inaccurate expression. It is no different for writing, he tells his students. But, he adds, "Mere competence isn't enough. Excellence is required."

In this course, students learn to use grammatical structures correctly, construct a complete sentence and paragraph, connect paragraphs together and use the different styles of writing. "Syntax and diction are tools effective only when they're used properly," he says.

With the tools of writing in hand, students turn to the challenge of expressing themselves. Here, too, Hussey teaches his students the necessary skills of logic and critical analysis. "These are the forensic tools of writing," he explains. In the writing assignments of this course, students choose a current issue that interests them, develop an opinion about it, and then explain their position clearly in an essay. He returns these essays with detailed notes, outlining suggested improvements, and allows students to resubmit their work after editing. Their confidence and "creative arrogance" soar.

"Our Home and Native Land"

"At the same time, a Canadian education has to be more than just Canadian content," insists Mike Hussey, an English teacher from Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto.

Childhood in Quebec gave him an important understanding of our cultural history, he says, and a view of how different European traditions combined with Canada's geography to create a national character that is unique. The Canadian voice should be the voice of reason, Hussey declares, and the voice of the sceptic who says, "Wait a minute, that doesn't make sense."

Hussey's own voice is deep and passionate when he speaks about this issue. Teaching in a school with a culturally diverse student population, he addresses the idea of forging a truly Canadian education in his classroom every day. Hussey develops and nurtures questioning and critical, independent thought in his students through class discussions, debates and writing assignments that challenge students to express an opinion on an ethical issue while honing their structural writing skills (see "Creative Arrogance in Writing," left).

Hussey suggests that rather than Canadian content for content's sake, a Canadian education should include elements that encourage the development of a Canadian voice and pride in a nation that allows exploration and freedom of thought. A course in ethics should be an integral part of Canadian education, too, says Hussey. "The study of ethics, logic and critical thinking idiot-proofs you against the simplistic and the trendy."

"The True North Strong and Free"

"But what about our Canadian values?" muses Matt Dawber, a music teacher at Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Stittsville, Ontario, and a member of the Tech-Connect team.

Part of our identity is a tradition of multicultural accommodation, he quietly insists. It is our promotion of tolerance and acceptance that makes us distinctive in the world, not our geography, a free press or the checks and balances of our parliamentary system. "We've always had an awareness of and support for the underdog and the disadvantaged."

A Canadian education should recognize and build on these traditions, he proposes. A Canadian education should impart a historical awareness of the broad mix of peoples who have contributed to our country and instil respect and a willingness to learn from each other. Canadians are respected and trusted around the world and our educational system should preserve and build on that reputation, he says.

This habit of accommodation is not always a good thing, counters Hussey. "When tolerance becomes permissiveness, and multiculturalism becomes stifling political correctness used to limit what a teacher can say or teach, then we're losing sight of what makes us Canadian, what makes education and what makes a Canadian education." It is more important to make sure a student can read than to monitor what they are reading, and more important to know that they can analyze and reason rather than launder what they are thinking, he says emphatically.

"Absolutely," agrees Helen Pat Hansen, a colleague of Dawber's at Sacred Heart. "When we encourage emphasis on our individual cultural backgrounds rather than on our shared Canadian background — and this applies to new Canadians, too — we lose sight of everything that Canada has to offer."

And while teaching and encouraging the values of tolerance, acceptance, honesty, integrity and fairness equip our students to be good global citizens, it does not necessarily have anything to do with developing a Canadian education, points out Jean-Daniel Roy, a Grade 5 teacher at École Sainte-Anne in Sherbrooke, Quebec. "Often the values we identify as being particularly Canadian are, in fact, things we believe should be universal human values."

And we teach them anyway, says Carl Goulding, a music teacher at Mount Pearl Intermediate School and Mount Pearl Senior High School in Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador. Our educational system already teaches these so-called Canadian values by developing confidence, responsibility and a good set of employability skills in our students. "This should be the aim of any course or curriculum; it doesn't need a special focus on Canadianism," Goulding continues.

Current Events

World politics and environmental issues take centre stage every morning in Ian Naisbitt's Grade 5 and 6 classroom at Concord Public School in Windsor, Ontario. "A team of students gives an oral presentation on a current event or issue," Naisbitt explains. "There are five teams, one for each day of the week. Each student in a group presents their current event or issue in front of the class."

As a minimum, each presentation must cover the five Ws, Naisbitt says. "Towards the end of the year, some of the presentations get quite sophisticated. A few students add audio-visual supporting material to their oral presentations." The rest of the class can ask three questions when the student is finished.

For the first two terms, the students state only the facts of the issue, but in the third term, with good research and analysis skills established, they may begin to include their opinions in their presentations, too. Often, lively classroom discussions ensue, Naisbitt reports.

"We Stand on Guard for Thee"

Whether or not teachers agree that a curriculum designed to foster Canadian attitudes or values is necessary, there is unanimity on the need in our education system for more recognition of Canadian heritage and Canadian contributions to the world.

"Canadians have a lot to be proud of," Matt Dawber points out, listing some Canadian accomplishments: the author of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was a Canadian. Canadians developed insulin and the polio vaccine, and the inventor of Standard Time was a Canadian. How can we pass this pride on to our students?

"By integrating Canadian awareness into the curriculum at every opportunity," suggests Ian Naisbitt from Concord Public School in Windsor, Ontario. Naisbitt developed his Grade 5 and 6 social studies units on Native Canadians to explore not only their history but also the history of European exploration. He uses these units to reinforce the environmental awareness developed in his watershed reclamation project as well.

Matt Dawber

Sacred Heart Catholic High School
Stittsville, Ontario

"Teaching is an extremely creative and challenging environment, requiring philosophy and creativity, skill sets and even, on some days, physical stamina. I highly enjoy the opportunity to think creatively in such a demanding environment and truly cherish those times when my deepest thoughts become meaningful and important lessons for my students. Good days are when I am fascinated and amazed at what we are talking about in class. It is surprising how fascinating even simple lessons can become! That is why I became a teacher. I thoroughly enjoy learning."

Valerie Pike

Prince of Wales Collegiate
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

"Like so many others in my profession, I share a deep commitment to teaching and to young people. As young learners make the transition to adulthood, they must be inspired to raise questions, be actively engaged in their learning and to be and do their best. I began teaching more than 20 years ago, inspired to contribute to and shape the lives of young adults. I have discovered that it is they who continuously inspire me, and who have greatly shaped and enriched my life."

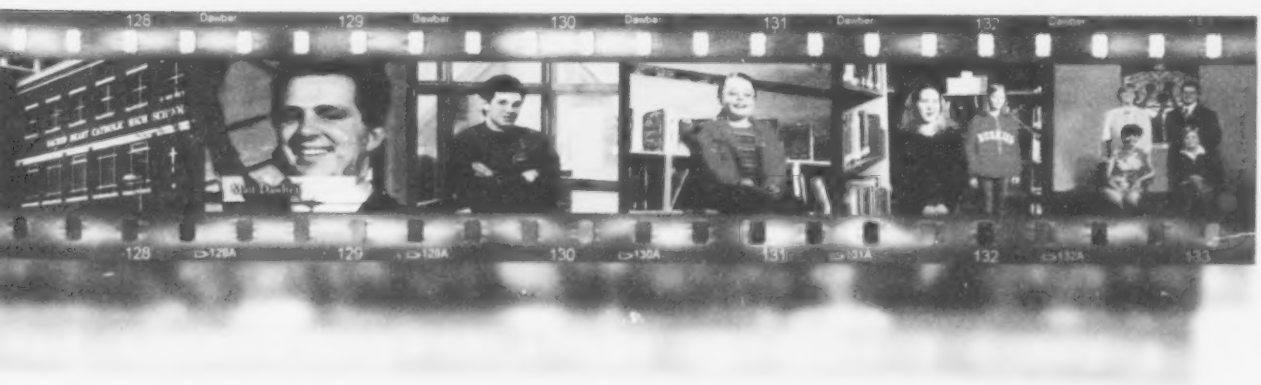
"It's also possible to 'spiral' lessons throughout the curriculum," says Ross Thompson, another music teacher, this time from New Minas Elementary School in New Minas, Nova Scotia. "Introduce a concept, for example the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, in Grade 1 and then return to it every year, gradually expanding and developing the students' appreciation and understanding of the Charter's impact on their lives and its example for human rights around the world." Lessons such as these address a variety of approaches to a Canadian education: national pride, civic virtues and Canadian content, he points out.

"But we have to remember that there are significant regional differences in our country, too, differences that are at least as significant as those that distinguish us from other countries," argues Valerie Pike. Canada is not a homogenous country in any respect. Too much focus on national content runs the risk of impeding an appreciation of the diversity of Canada, she says.

"Develop an appreciation for our Canadian past," suggests Mike Hussey of Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute. "For a variety of reasons, students today don't have a sense of history; they don't seem to understand that it didn't all start with them. We need to show students how and more importantly, why, our laws and traditions developed."

"At the very least, there should be a map of Canada in every classroom," says Deb Robinson, principal of Guardian Angels Catholic School in Stittsville, Ontario. Such a simple detail, one that is missing from many Canadian classrooms, would contribute greatly to forming a Canadian education for our students.

Perhaps the best way to describe Canadian education as it is today is to compare it to an interconnected web of ideas and values, concludes Pike. While there is more empty space than thread or cord in a web, it is the thread that gives the web its strength and allows it to cradle the myriad of traditions, characteristics, regional identities and values that are taught as part of a Canadian education.



Certificate of Achievement Recipients,

The 2001–2002 Certificate of Achievement recipients are listed here by province. For each of the 50 recipients, there is a short biography and a description of some of their award-winning teaching ideas. If you are interested in contacting one of these outstanding teachers, please visit the program Web site (**http://www.pma-ppm.ca**), call our hotline (1 800 575-9200) or send an e-mail to **pmawards@ic.gc.ca**

Newfoundland and Labrador

Stella Greenslade

Mount Pearl Senior High School, Mount Pearl

Grades 10–12: enterprise, consumer studies, global issues, Canadian geography

Believing that every student has a spirit of enterprise that is most appropriately developed through active, constructive learning, Stella Greenslade developed her successful and popular enterprise education course. Each student develops a business venture, either alone or in partnership with another student. They set goals, write a business plan organize, finance, market and implement their business venture. The course encourages students to turn a passion into a learning experience, emphasizes the development of flexible, transferable skills and promotes creative thinking and competition. Students achieve pass rates of over 92 percent and win awards and cash prizes in local and provincial enterprise competitions. Several former students now run their own productive businesses

Paul Matthews

Booth Memorial High School, St. John's

Grades 10–12: literature, reading, language, advanced writing

Paul Matthews sees teaching as a two-way conversation. To encourage his students to participate in this conversation, he remains always open and receptive to their ideas. In addition, he promotes publication of students' work, maintains a bulletin board of student writing and encourages public speaking and oral presentations. He inspires students with lively and stimulating learning experiences, draws on a wide range of literary resources, including electronic libraries, and adapts his teaching strategies for each class. For example, he created a remedial reading program for at-risk students. As a result, his classes at this inner-city school have low absentee rates and a 97 percent pass rate. Students have won provincial essay competitions and scored high on Advance Placement and College Board examinations.

Carolyn Morgan

Bishops College, St. John's

Grades 10–12: English

"You cannot expect others to walk where you fear to go yourself." Carolyn Morgan's motto has led her, and her students, into some exciting learning experiences: for example, the cross-curricular Metamorphosis project, in which art students created visual interpretations of English students' written descriptions of fantasy creatures. Technology students then digitally photographed this artwork and created book covers to bind the stories. Morgan encourages her students to delve deeper into a study text by inviting artists, craftspeople, writers and actors to share their expertise and give insights on the creative process. Students consistently win scholarships and honours in debating tournaments, public-speaking competitions, poetry and essay-writing contests.

Gary Parsons

Herdman Collegiate, Corner Brook

Grades 10–12: social studies

Gary Parsons believes that it is important not only to focus on academics but also to provide opportunities for students to maximize their learning through humanitarian activities. He creates interesting, engaging projects for students to expand and increase their learning. For example, evaluating government policies and programs encourages students to think critically, while researching a particular immigrant group develops research, learning and technology skills. Parsons also created the Herdman Humanities Society to promote active citizenship and stewardship. Society members work with Oxfam Canada and Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and participate in the 30-Hour Famine and many other activities. Students earn scholarships and are selected to participate in conferences, trade missions, youth parliaments and ambassador programs.

2001–2002

Michelle Stead

Topsail Elementary School, Topsail

Grade 6: all subjects

Michelle Stead pioneered the Grade 6 Intensive French Program at Topsail Elementary School, and developed curricula, sequenced learning activities and resources for it. The program combines a first term of 80 percent French-language instruction with a compacted core curriculum in the second term, allowing students to acquire second-language proficiency while meeting grade-level curriculum outcomes. Immersed in this rich, stimulating and supportive learning environment, students developed second-language skills equivalent to those of senior high school students. The program benefited everyone involved; students, parents, fellow teachers and community members developed a better understanding of the Francophone world and its role in Canadian heritage.

Nova Scotia

Joanne Cameron

Shannon Park Elementary School, Dartmouth

Grades 1–6: resource teacher, language arts (French immersion)

Joanne Cameron strives to improve the learning environment for all her students. She guides students to take responsibility for their own learning, participate in peer, self- and teacher evaluations of their work, create portfolios and present their work to classmates and parents. Students also determine class events, and discuss behaviour, conflict resolution and mediation techniques. She advocates for at-risk students and develops programs to respond to their specific needs, including comprehension strategies and reading techniques. Cameron also stresses the ability to speak and write well in both official languages by having students listen to professional storytellers, analyze their story development and speaking techniques and then write their own stories.

Teresa Kewachuk

The Hants East Rural High School, Milford

Grades 11 and 12: global geography studies, geography, history

"Teresa Kewachuk has created a virtual welcome mat for global studies in our school," says the principal of The Hants East Rural High School. She designed a wide variety of projects that challenge students to learn about their world. These include a unit on changing trends in human migration, which contrasts textbook immigration data with on-line information, the Commonwealth Atlas 2000 project in which students did in-depth research on three countries, and partnerships with the local forestry industry to explore long-term forest use. Kewachuk has also participated in the development of the geography curriculum at the school board and with the provincial department of education.

Peter Selig

Horton High School, Greenwich

Grade 12: biology

Exploring the *how* and *why* of biology, rather than sticking with memorizing *what* and *where*, makes biology fun and elicits students' best efforts, Peter Selig's two goals of teaching. He attracts students with a wide range of interests and abilities to his classes by creating an inclusive, welcoming environment and using a cross-curricular approach to biology. He provides manipulative materials such as Lego and clay, includes computers and laser disk technology in lab activities and leads field trips to demonstrate that biology is a series of connections rather than a set of individual facts. Selig also introduced an honours biology program to the school and tutors Advanced Placement biology students.

New Brunswick

Lise Bourgeois

George Street Middle School, Fredericton

Grade 8: mathematics, physical education

Building on the belief that students will respond with respect when they are treated with respect, Lise Bourgeois sets out to make math fun for her students. Math lessons are integrated with instruction in science, language arts, French or social studies to increase learning and comprehension. Students build paper airplanes or bake and build gingerbread houses to learn and use mathematical formulae. Theme activities such as "The Space Unit" tie math ideas together to increase student comprehension and group problem solving, while various activities test students' understanding of math concepts. As a result, more than 95 percent of students achieve passing grades in math. In addition, students score well in French Immersion, and, one year, two "problem students" received awards for exemplary improvement.

John Murphy

Hampton High School, Hampton

Grades 9–12: visual arts and theatre arts

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Inspired by these lines in *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* written by John Peters Humphrey, a New Brunswick native, John Murphy instigates and facilitates artistic and humanitarian projects for the entire school community. For example, Between the Lines displayed more than 60 pieces of student art inspired by the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* at the New Brunswick Museum and the 30-Hour Fast Blast raised money for AIDS hospices in South Africa and land mine victims in Nicaragua. These projects develop thoughtful and interested citizens, ready and able to make a contribution to the world.

Quebec

Nicole Fournier

John Rennie High School, Pointe-Claire

Grades 9–11: biology, physical education, leadership

Nicole Fournier develops respect for self, respect for others and respect for the environment in her students. She designed an innovative physical education and leadership course that teaches sportsmanship, community involvement and mentoring as well as physical education. Students complete a 50-page report on their individual physiology, which integrates many disciplines, such as mathematics, physics, language and life skills. Fournier stresses inclusion in every activity. She adapts course expectations, encourages special needs students to participate and recruits other students as mentors and advocates. Graduates include many nurses, doctors, paramedics, coaches and an Olympic athlete, all of whom credit her influence in their career choices. The student average in the leadership course is over 85 percent.

Ontario

Pat Binnersley

Northeastern Secondary School, Garson

Grades 9, 10, 11, OAC: English

Pat Binnersley has a passion for learning, say her students, a passion that she passes on to them with energy and enthusiasm. She moves teaching outside the classroom with integrated study programs, and created an applied English course for identified at-risk learners. Binnersley has initiated several new programs at her school that benefit students: the Parent Liaison Committee works to improve students' academic progress and Teacher Advisory Groups (begun four years ahead of provincial requirement) provide advice, tutoring and non-academic information to students in a homeroom style setting. She helps fellow teachers, too, leading workshops on curriculum development and mentoring new teachers.

Peter Bowen

K. P. Manson Public School, Severn Bridge

Grades 7 and 8: all subjects except French and physical education

Peter Bowen believes that learning takes place beyond the classroom. Putting this belief in action, he introduces interesting projects and units of study that use technology, Bloom's taxonomy, self-assessment and problem solving to create a stimulating learning environment for all students. These projects include using the Lego ROBOLAB program to design and program autonomous robots, participating in the Canadian National Marsville Program to "build" a Mars colony, and running a year-long dance study unit that culminated in evening performances to raise money for a class trip. Bowen acts as a resident technology expert at the school and develops workshops to share his wide expertise with fellow teachers.

Wende Collins

West Carleton Secondary School, Dunrobin

Grades 10 to OAC: civics, law, peer helping

Challenge encourages growth, says Wende Collins. She believes that every student — regardless of his or her ability or learning disability — can succeed and, not only that, will often exceed all expectations! Collins accommodates her students' learning needs with a variety of teaching styles. She uses lectures, mock trials and debating sessions to develop critical thinking and communications skills, gives practical assignments to encourage research skills and creative thinking, and brings in guest speakers to capture students' interest and train their listening skills. Under her guidance, the revitalized Peer Helpers program resulted in a significant increase in student interest and participation, promoted leadership skills and encouraged general-level students to stay in school.

George Cuckovic

St. Thomas of Villanova Catholic Secondary School, Lasalle

Grades 9 to OAC: science, mathematics, chemistry, physics

George Cuckovic's unique Living Lab, a classroom mini-zoo of amphibians, reptiles, arachnids and insects, each in their own controlled environment, brings biology, ecology, habitat restoration, horticulture and genetics to life for his students and provides a setting for special needs students to shine. This and his equally innovative and inspirational approach to chemistry and physics builds the strong educational foundation Cuckovic believes his students need to succeed. A significant number of Villanova students continue their study of sciences in post-secondary school, and former students consistently rank at the top of post-secondary chemistry classes.

Carl Des Granges

Bayside Public School, Belleville

Grade 6, French immersion

"Carl Des Granges leads a classroom like no other, using his ingenious ability to enlighten the lives of so many children. His work is stimulating, exhilarating and contagious." So raves the happy parent of a student who, over the school year, learned about the West through a rodeo and Wild West competition, was a "citizen" of a classroom small town complete with elected officials and a thriving economy of micro-dollars and contributed to a class-produced newsletter (in English and French). Students cap their year (and test their French skills) with an overnight trip to Montréal that includes dinner in a French restaurant, tours of several museums and singing the national anthem in Olympic Stadium.

Karen Fagg

Richmond Rose Public School, Richmond Hill

Grades 6–8: English, mathematics, drama, social science, computers, dance

"Every students is capable of great success — all they need is a push in the right direction," says Karen Fagg. She weaves together curriculum elements from different subjects to create interesting, challenging assignments, and adapts teaching methods to accommodate special needs and English as a Second Language students. If more assistance is needed, she initiates a "growth plan" for struggling students in consultation with other teachers and outside assessment. Students achieve a 100 percent pass rate in her classes, with 80 percent of students placing at or above provincial standards. Last, but not least, she inspires students to develop strong leadership skills through volunteer work, extracurricular activities and sports teams.

Marcie Greatrex

Donview Middle School, Toronto

Grades 6–8: English, history, geography, mathematics

Convinced that all students deserve the opportunity to learn in their own special way, Marcie Greatrex integrates hands-on strategies into her teaching program and teaches the same things in a variety of ways to allow students time to absorb and integrate new concepts. A Day at the Beach touches on all curricula areas, for example, math to measure volumes of sand and the perimeter of the pool, and language to write descriptions and proper sentences. Field trips, cooking lessons and skits teach life skills, cooperation and the knowledge students need in the future, while teaching math skills and other academic material for the present. With this approach, students' attitude, behaviour and academic progress improve immensely.

Jaye Herbert

Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School, London

Grades 10 to OAC: computer science

Jaye Herbert first challenges her students to be the best they can be, then creates a positive learning environment, one that helps students meet (and exceed) her challenge. She has developed on-line guides to her classroom courses that include course outlines, practice assignments and links to useful sites. These guides encourage and teach flexibility, research skills and personal time management. A School to Work program offers students industry standard certification and secondary school credits at the same time. Her classes have an 85 percent student average, and many students continue computer-related studies after high school.

Jeannine Jefferson

St. Mary's College, Sault Ste. Marie

Grades 9 and 10: comprehensive arts, French immersion

Evoking passion and ownership for their projects draws the best from students, believes Jeannine Jefferson. She evokes this passion and commitment by showing her students her own passion for the arts and for learning. Using her extensive background in community theatre, Jefferson spearheaded the design of the comprehensive arts program at St. Mary's College, combining dance, drama, music and visual arts. She gave wings to a fledgling French Immersion program at the school, connecting students' real life experiences with the classroom material and integrating religion, geography and art into the French curriculum. Students flock to participate in her courses, and the school's Christian liturgies and drama presentations.

Austin Lowe

Kingston Collegiate and Vocational Institute, Kingston
Board-wide radio broadcasting focus program

"I don't teach radio. I use radio to teach," says Austin Lowe. It may sound simple, but he packs a lot of teaching into that statement. His innovative radio broadcasting program broadcasts (on KCVI 91.9 FM) and streams over the Internet (**http://www.thecave.ca**) 52 hours of student-developed and -produced programming a week. The program sets high standards and expectations, provides students with variety of possible career paths and a strong network of connections and partnerships, and teaches technical skills as well as writing, research, interviewing, science and business skills. Students gain work experience and a great sense of responsibility and pride. (Lowe died in the summer of 2002.)

Maryanne Marsh

Rosedale Heights Secondary School, Toronto
Grades 9 to OAC: dance

Maryanne Marsh brings the energy and drama of dance to her students. With patient dedication, innovative dance practice routines, lessons in the elements of dance, choreography, staging and the use of drama, she introduces her students to three types of dance, jazz, ballet and modern dance. Students also learn choreography, staging and the skill of critiquing dance, the history of dance, human anatomy and the relationship between dance and culture. In just two years, under her guidance, the dance program at Rosedale Heights grew from two Grade 10 classes to six, one for each grade. After another two years, the program had grown still more to 12 classes, teaching 240 students.

Hughena Matheson

Orchard Park Secondary School, Stoney Creek
Grades 9 to OAC: English, Latin, peer tutoring

Believing that a teacher's role is to promote excellence in education and to develop the whole child, Hughena Matheson worked with Grade 9, resource and guidance teachers to develop the school's Reading Assistance Program (RAP). The course develops speaking, writing process and computer skills, involves parents as part of the educational team and encourages senior RAP students to tutor junior students, bringing success to both. Standardized tests show many students improve by two grade levels in one semester. Matheson also developed a popular pen-pal program between Orchard Park and a nearby elementary school and encourages students to enter school and provincial debating, essay, poetry and public-speaking competitions.

Patricia Mooney

Turner Fenton Secondary School, Brampton
Grades 9 to OAC: English, journalism, Writer's Craft

Patricia Mooney sees publication as the goal of all writers and as an obtainable goal for all her students. To help students achieve this goal, she both develops the necessary excellence of writing and creates real-life journalism roles for her students: they produce the school newspaper and quarterly newsletter, won a contract to produce the Credit Valley Conservation Authority newspaper and write for a community newspaper. Many students move directly from her journalism course to co-op placements at newspapers and advertising agencies. Others go on to become professional writers and graphic designers. Writer's Craft and journalism portfolios gain students admission to prestigious university and college programs in writing, television arts and graphic design.

Susan Smith

Centennial Secondary School, Belleville
Grades 10–12: parenting, hospitality, special education

Every student has unique skills that, with nurturing, will allow them to become happy, confident young adults, says Susan Smith. To nurture the unique skills of her students, Smith created a unique program: Young Caterers of Centennial Hospitality Technology. Designed primarily to address the needs of high-risk students, the teacher- and student-driven and self-supporting course brings 100 students from all levels together to run a catering company. Students learn a wide variety of marketable skills that integrate and apply concepts from many other disciplines. The Young Caterers have an outstanding reputation and graduates move on to co-op placements, employment and post-secondary studies in hospitality.

Manitoba

Peter Bjornson

Gimli High School, Gimli
Grades 8–12: history, geography, psychology, social studies

Peter Bjornson brings history — and learning — to life for his students, literally. His innovative projects emphasize awareness and appreciation of local history along with developing cooperative learning skills. Projects include the student-painted Heritage Mural depicting experiences of early Ukrainian settlers and the Icelandic culture of the Gimli area, and a World War I trench and bunker complex constructed in a nearby farmer's field where students re-enact battles in cold, muddy October weather. Not surprisingly, Biornson's students maintain high attendance, high levels of participation and low failure rates with no discipline problems. As a result of the exemplary research and study skills they develop, several students win scholarships each year, while others pursue degrees in education and Canadian history.

Grant Kreuger

R. D. Parker Collegiate, Thompson

Grades 10, 12: power mechanics, aerospace

Grant Kreuger believes that "a job is the task at hand; it can pay the bills. A career is the labour of love." Obviously seeing his teaching as a career rather than a job, he single-handedly developed and instituted the aerospace technology program at R. D. Parker Collegiate. This program, developed in conjunction with the aviation industry in Thompson, is the first in Manitoba at the high school level. A broad range of students, both male and female, take his courses and achieve a passing rate of 90 percent in Grade 10 and 98 percent in Grade 12. All go on to related jobs or college programs.

James McLellan

Arthur A. Leach School, Winnipeg

Grades 7–9: art, drama, digital filmmaking

James McLellan thinks an at-risk child is as full of potential as a gifted child. To tap that potential, he will bring parents, other teachers, community mentors and experts together for the benefit of the student. McLellan spearheaded an integrated digital film-making program at his school that improves language skills, scriptwriting and speaking abilities through acting, and creates a sense of teamwork and dedication in his students. Many at-risk students with so much interest and a new sense of self-worth stay in school and off streets, and school enrolment (in a low enrolment area) has jumped 15 percent. Many students continue with film-making after graduation, and students have been nominated for filmmaking awards in Toronto and Greece.

Lesley Sisler

The Collegiate at the University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg

Grades 10–12: French, women's studies, world issues

To inspire her students to take a risk, go beyond the average and perform at a higher level, Lesley Sisler creates a learning environment in which students can explore and exceed their limits. She spearheaded the introduction of the women's studies program at her school, including a unique course entitled Gender and Politics, currently under consideration for co-credit as a first-year undergraduate course at the University of Winnipeg. She creates lively and interesting French classes filled with debate, activities and topics of interest to the class and led the development of a unique fine arts program offering courses in cooperation with the Winnipeg arts community. This program has been recognized and honoured provincially and nationally for its innovative approach to teaching the arts.

Saskatchewan

Kevin Hrycay

Esterhazy High School, Esterhazy

Grades 6–12: band, choir, computers

Kevin Hrycay wanted to share the power of music with every child in his school, so he revitalized the music program. He incorporated music technology into the program and classroom teaching, combined music theory and composition with MIDI technology and integrated students of all abilities into the music program and ensembles. After two years, student participation in the music program doubled. In the 2000–2001 school year, thanks to Hrycay's high standards of music excellence and dedication of the students, the music program captured all the awards at local music festival and the Senior Concert Band won gold at the National Music Festival (Musicfest).

Alberta

Virginia Alarcon

Dene Tha' Community School, Chateh

Resource teacher: all core elementary subjects

With the determination to make a difference in the lives of her students in every little way possible, Virginia Alarcon transformed a special education classroom of angry, violent and uncooperative students into an oasis of quiet, calm and focussed learning. Drawing on teaching experience and practical and theoretical knowledge from a wide variety of countries and settings, she develops relationships and trust with students through continuous positive and constructive feedback, innovative teaching strategies such as using a favourite profanity as the basis for a lesson in acronyms and descriptive words, and two-way learning. Students more than doubled the average score on provincial achievement tests and continue to excel in school in later grades.

Marguerite Smyth Burns

Avalon Junior High School, Edmonton

Grades 7–9: instrumental music

Marguerite Smyth Burns knows that every child who begins instrumental music in junior high school has a dream. "Nobody takes a music class and hopes to sound bad," she says. Students learn to play at least one instrument, while learning the principles of music performance and critical listening. They also learn to read and interpret music notation, learn basic music theory, explore music creation and develop their own creativity. Her extensive musical curriculum and four extracurricular school bands attract students from out of the district to attend the school's music program. This results in a demanding practice schedule for students and teacher but an impressive list of awards for all bands and individual students.

Clarice Gilbert

Hazel Cameron Elementary School, Vulcan

Grade 4: language arts, social studies, science, math, health, music, art, technology

For Clarice Gilbert and her students, the world is a classroom, and they are always on the lookout for new learning experiences. Teacher's aids, paraprofessionals, parents, therapists and child welfare workers are all welcome as part of the educational team for the many special needs students in the class. Occupational and physical therapy activities designed for special needs students are integrated into the daily lessons of all children, for example, finger-stretching exercises that are designed to help students with low muscle tone become preparation for spelling tests, while manipulatives, drawings, "teach me, teach you" situations and musical adaptations teach math concepts. Gilbert stresses responsibility, good manners and respect with a kind, firm manner and clearly stated consequences.

Dean Hawkins

Sunnyside School, Lethbridge

Grades 2, 3, 5, 6: mathematics, language arts, physical education, health, spelling

"I want the students to see how proud I am of their accomplishments. That's why I teach: to see a student become successful," says Dean Hawkins. Bringing a spirit of excitement and enthusiasm to classroom teaching and emphasizing hard work and good effort, Hawkins makes the most of his teaching by capitalizing on his strengths and sharing some teaching tasks with other teachers whose interest and expertise are greater than his own. As principal, he has introduced activities that raise morale, and instil citizenship, responsibility and the excitement of learning. And his students succeed. All Grade 3 students met the Acceptable standard on provincial achievement tests, while 53 percent reached the Excellent standard.

Barry Hertz

St. Mary's High School, Calgary

Grades 11–12: biology

Nurturing a positive environment that supports the learning of all students, Barry Hertz draws on his background of bee keeping, wine making, music making and fieldwork to bring biology alive for his students. He provides students with many concrete learning opportunities through field trips and classroom activities, and founded several extracurricular groups to help students further develop their interests, such as the aquatic ecology club, species maintenance program and outdoor pursuit club. He also delivers the International Baccalaureate (IB) biology program at the school, which involves an extensive commitment of teacher training and student mentoring. Students thrive, exceed provincial standards and score high on IB exams.

Bruce MacDonald

Edwin Parr Composite Community School, Athabasca

Grades 9–12: drama, theatre, video production technology

"Build a relationship with your students. Teaching is all about relationships," says Bruce MacDonald. With high expectations for student participation and attitude and plenty of encouragement to explore the wide range of skills and career possibilities in theatre, and by teaching skills that will benefit students in later life regardless of their career path, MacDonald builds solid, positive and lasting relationships with his students. The drama department produces consistently high quality productions, with enthusiastic student participation in classroom and extracurricular activities. He encourages students to enter drama competitions to inspire them to achieve excellence. In seven of the past ten years, an Edwin Parr school play has advanced to the provincial drama festival, and students have consistently won awards, including scholarships.

Bruce Oka

Midland Colony School, Taber

Grades 4–8: all subjects

Bruce Oka is one of only two teachers at Midland Colony School, a Hutterian Brethren Colony school. He has established a climate at the school that promotes the growth of the whole child — academics, social skills, and emotional and physical health. He fosters his students' joy in learning and encourages the development of many academic skills, including English oral skills with plenty of hands-on experiments with real scientific equipment, interesting math problems and relevant student writing. He makes his class a warm, welcoming and busy place. Seeing the need for an improved library of books for the Colony, he sought funds to create a travelling library of culturally appropriate, quality books for all reading levels.

Marilee Paterson

Tom Baines School, Calgary

Grades 8–9: social studies, life skills

Marilee Paterson believes that when everyday people talk to everyday people, everyone gains a wonderful understanding of the way others live. She applies this belief to her teaching through her From Russia With Love project, which helps Canadian students develop an understanding of Russia's quickly changing political and social reality. Her students communicate with students and teachers from Ekaterinburg, Russia using digital video and still images, e-mail, on-line live discussions and a project Web page (**http://canada.eimc.ru**). What began as a one-teacher search for Russian sources by e-mail has grown into an ongoing collaborative project involving 11 teachers and nine classes of students in two countries.

Fred Sproule

Victoria School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Edmonton

Grades 10–12: social studies, world religion

Recognizing that a formal education is only one facet of life, Fred Sproule brings as much life as possible to his social studies classes. He shares his love of the subject with his students, making complex concepts simple, presenting balanced and thorough lessons in history, political science and geography that include many views of historical events. He holds students' attentions by designing interesting assignments and presentations and instigating lively discussions when a change of pace is necessary. Nearly all senior students reach the Acceptable standard in provincial exams, while students achieve a 100 percent pass rate on the International Baccalaureate social studies exam, with 30 percent of those students gaining the highest ranking.

DeeAnne Vonde

Lord Beaverbrook High School, Calgary

Grades 10–12: leadership, food preparation, career and life management

DeeAnne Vonde's primary goals are first to teach her students to ask questions, then to teach them how to find the answers. To promote the growth of student leadership and give students a forum for their voices and ideas, she redesigned the school's leadership program. The program creates situations of mutual learning, develops initiatives to benefit both school and community, fosters mentoring relationships and improves the social atmosphere of the school. She also develops alliances with community organizations and businesses and finds volunteer opportunities for her students in elementary schools. Students receive recognition and awards for their contributions, including the Millennium Excellence Award and YWCA Calgary Women of Distinction Award.

British Columbia

Fred Cohen

Talmud Torah, Vancouver

Kindergarten–Grade 7: information technology

Fred Cohen spearheaded the development of a technological environment in the school, in which computers are important tools in many lessons, not the lesson itself. He developed and implements curricula for classes from Kindergarten to Grade 7, teaching Grade 1 students computer basics and helping Grade 7s design and develop their own video productions. He and his students use a Hebrew word-processing program to send e-mails to pen pals in Israel and English word-processing for pen pals in Vancouver. Students are happy and excited in his class and flock to the computer lab at lunchtime and after school. When they enter high school, they have the technology skills and experience they need to take on advanced projects.

Stephen Cox

Shawnigan Lake School, Shawnigan Lake

Grades 11–12: mathematics, calculus

"Don't only teach to the curriculum, teach for understanding." Stephen Cox is successful in this aim; students regularly request his class because they know they will learn from him. His students have a 100 percent pass rate in Grade 12 math despite an open enrolment policy. Students often win zone championships in math contests and many are invited to the Canadian Mathematics Challenge. Beginning in 1978 with two computers, Cox pioneered the introduction of computers and computer studies to the school. The program has grown to two large computer labs, a computer graphics lab and full Internet wiring throughout the campus. Many of his first computer students now work in the computer industry.

Dan Craven, Dave Stewart

Kwalikum Secondary School, Qualicum Beach

Grades 9–12: choral music, vocal jazz, band, stage band, jazz band, guitar, visual arts, media

Dan Craven and Dave Stewart share their musical expertise with a growing group of excited musical students. The teachers' innovative blended course of band and social studies allows musical instruction to take place all year long in a semestered school. Craven and Stewart also founded bands and ensembles within the music program, believing that band experience not only teaches musical and performing expertise but also develops valuable social skills of teamwork, organization, responsibility and leadership. Since early involvement in the music program and training is key to student success, the teacher team works with middle-level feeder schools to identify potential students and advertise the Kwalikum Secondary music program.

Karen Dicks

St. Michaels University Junior School, Victoria

Kindergarten: all core subjects

Believing that the education of a child requires a triad of student, teacher and parent, Karen Dicks welcomes parents to a classroom and school year filled with a wide variety of fun, exciting and interesting educational activities. She models and teaches positive qualities to her budding students, setting them on a path towards effective learning and social interaction, using discussion, problem solving and activities to teach respect, self-confidence, self-awareness, critical thinking, logical action and appreciation for the qualities of others. At the end of the year, each child receives a Memory Book containing photos, examples of work, stories and memories of their time in Dicks' class.

David Flello

Esquimalt Community School, Victoria

Grades 8–12: music, jazz studies, outdoor education

David Flello conducts his music students towards excellence through his love of music, love of students and exacting, honest feedback. As students follow the music program, attending mandatory after-school jam sessions, giving approximately four performances a week and developing increasing responsibility for their own success, they develop skills in two areas: music and character development. Even students who do not excel academically achieve remarkable success in music. Students participate in numerous provincial, national and international music festivals, and approximately 80 percent continue their involvement in professional music performance, either full or part time, after high school graduation.

Leona Géber, Christine Letourneau, Rebecca Rogers

Shannon Lake Elementary School, Westbank

Grade 1: all subjects except music

Aware that the negative consequences of early reading problems can compound over time, Leona Géber, Christine Letourneau and Rebecca Rogers developed, implemented and refined an early literacy program that effectively meets the needs of beginning students, minimizing their frustration and increasing their learning. The teachers screen children entering Kindergarten and Grade 1 to identify existing abilities and missing skills, allowing effective early intervention and assistance. A team of the classroom teacher, speech language teacher, learning assistance teacher and parent volunteers administers entertaining and interesting intervention strategies to student groups or individuals. As a result, more students are reading, at a higher level and with more confidence.

Angelika Hedley

Burnsview Junior Secondary School, Delta

Grades 8–10: all subjects for students with learning disabilities

All students, even those with severe learning disabilities, are the "captains of their fate and the masters of their soul," believes Angelika Hedley. She designed and manages a successful, dynamic program for students with severe learning disabilities and significant delays in social-emotional development. The program includes an individual education plan for each student and a dizzying array of learning centres, specialized activities, teaching strategies, software applications, study guides and behaviour self-assessment routines. Students succeed beyond expectations and all show significant improvement in reading ability, with some reading scores improving by 50 to 100 percent. There is a 100 percent retention rate in the class, despite the fact that it is not mandatory.

John Moxon

Kelowna Secondary School, Kelowna

Grades 11–12: physics

Physics is not just for the smart kids and the boys; all students have the ability to "do physics," insists John Moxon. He challenges his students to continually question the world around them, to discover the why behind every phenomenon they see. Students rearrange their schedules to get into his classes and greatly benefit from his diverse range of teaching methods, including using analogies, metaphors, humourous stories and guided and independent investigations. He translates difficult theoretical concepts into functional realities with skilled use of concrete examples, visual supports and hands-on learning tasks. The participation rate in physics is approximately twice the provincial rate, with a steady increase in honours and Advanced Placement physics enrolment.

Patricia Pownall

Midway Elementary School, Midway

Grades 1–3: all subjects

Patricia Pownall believes that every child is a unique work of nature waiting to bloom, and that it is her job to nurture and nourish that bloom. She skilfully manages a triple-grade class and uses an integrated thematic approach to teach to each child's ability, guiding or challenging as needed, with a buddy system for large projects to build confidence and teamwork. In addition, she creatively involves parents in their child's education with activities and events that bring the parents into the class, such as breakfasts and a pumpkin carving night. Daily journals and projects are sent home weekly to boost children's pride in their work and keep parents involved.

Northwest Territories

Gayla Meredith

Range Lake North School, Yellowknife

Grades 2--3: language arts, mathematics, integrated studies, computers

"We wrote books and poems, played games and she taught us art. We had fun and did tons of learning at the same time," says one of Gayla Meredith's former students. Her integrated study projects, such as book making, incorporate and teach all aspects of the curriculum as the students research the material for their books in the library, on the Internet, in newspapers and in other sources. These projects develop a wide variety of valuable skills, including creativity, attention to detail, collaborative thinking and problem solving, and give students pride and enthusiasm about learning. Meredith also videotapes her students' oral presentations and public speaking, a highly effective method of feedback for students and information for parents on their child's progress.

About the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence

The Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize the efforts of outstanding teachers in all disciplines who provide students with the tools to become good citizens, to develop and thrive as individuals, and to contribute to Canada's growth, prosperity and well-being.

The education stakeholders from across Canada who make up the national and regional selection committees look for evidence that teachers have achieved outstanding results with students, inspired them to learn and continue learning, and equipped them with the skills and attitudes they need to succeed in our changing society and knowledge-based economy. Specifically, they recognize nominees who have excelled in the following areas:

- innovative and exemplary teaching practices
- student skills development
- student interest and participation
- student achievement and performance
- teacher commitment and leadership.

Teachers are eligible for two awards: the Certificate of Excellence and the Certificate of Achievement. All recipients receive a certificate and pin, along with a letter from the Prime Minister. Recipients' schools receive cash awards to be used for educational purposes, such as professional development or equipment, and a certificate recognizing their support and contribution to the teachers' achievement.

Fifteen Certificate of Excellence recipients travel to Ottawa for four days of tours, best practice sessions and a ceremony with the Prime Minister at which they receive their award certificate. Cabinet ministers or members of Parliament are invited to participate in local events to honour Certificate of Achievement recipients in their communities.

For more information about the program, call our hotline (1 800 575-9200), e-mail us (**pmawards@ic.gc.ca**) or visit our Web site (**http://www.pma-ppm.ca**).

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Corporate Sponsors

Bell Canada supports programs such as the following that promote educational excellence and help Canadians improve and learn in new ways: The Network of Innovative Schools, the Canada-Wide Science Fair; the Media Awareness Network and the Youth Science Foundation. Bell also supports the Governor General's Award for Teaching Canadian History. In addition, Bell Canada supports research initiatives at universities throughout Canada with the most significant investment being the Bell University Labs program — an integrated research and commercial network that links Bell professionals with university researchers. Bell's contribution covers endowed chairs, applied research projects, lab infrastructure and research support related to emerging wireline and wireless communications, e-commerce and information technology.

Canadian Learning Television (CLT), Canada's only national educational television specialty service, offers a unique blend of enlightening and entertaining programming designed to challenge and inform, enrich and educate. Many CLT programs are connected to credit courses at universities across Canada. Learn as you watch some of the best programming TV has to offer in the areas of careers, film and media studies, war and history, science and nature, and more. Log on to **http://www.clt.ca** to find out more.

In addition to *GE Canada*'s many contributions to educational institutions, GE is a major supporter of science and technology programs such as Youth Science Foundation, Scientists in School and Junior Achievement. GE's employee volunteer organization, Elfun, helps students through an education outreach program that includes workshops, contests, mentorships and assistance in areas such as career awareness and college selection. GE Canada has also recruited more than 100 interns from across Canada through the Career Edge National Youth Internship Program. As well, through the GE Fund, GE provides financial grants to hundreds of students in Canada and the United States through its STAR awards program.

Kraft Canada has a tradition of supporting national programs that recognize learning and education among Canadians. Kraft has been a major sponsor of the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence since 1997. The company also actively funds a number of scholarships that encourage higher learning in the areas of food sciences and nutrition. Kraft supports excellence in marketing research and teaching activities, with an emphasis on Canadian content, with the Nabisco Professorship in Marketing at the Richard Ivey School of Business. Kraft is also committed to promoting education and the love of reading to children throughout the country. The company strives to enhance children's love of reading through the prestigious Mr. Christie's Book Award, a uniquely Canadian program that recognizes excellence in children's literature.

Microsoft Canada is committed to helping ensure that Canada's teachers have access to the tools and resources needed for them to effectively prepare our students for the challenges of the global digital economy. Through teacher training initiatives such as the Microsoft Mentor Program, Intel's Teach to the Future, and Nortel Networks' Teacher Training Program, Microsoft has supported the training of more than one million teachers worldwide. These valuable teacher training programs have provided thousands of Canadian educators with access to software tutorials, shared lesson plan ideas, on-line seminars on key topics such as managing technology in the classroom, and links to Web resources. Microsoft has also built relationships with universities, colleges and departments of education in order to provide technology resources for teachers, and grants in support of professional development initiatives. In addition to teacher training, Microsoft teams with private and public sector partners to help schools increase access to technology for every student and teacher and build strong technology infrastructures that support student learning and school administration.

RBC Foundation focusses on initiatives that help kids stay and flourish in school. Since 1999, RBC has invested more than $5 million in funding to after-school programs across Canada that provide children and youth with a range of structured, supervised activities after school ends for the day. RBC also supports programs that promote financial literacy, as well as employment and employability for people of all ages. As a supporter of Career Edge, a national youth internship program that gives recent university graduates the opportunity to learn and gain practical work experience, RBC has placed more than 250 interns, with more than 200 paired with RBC Royal Bank small business clients.

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